

Stella Creasy Labour/Co-operative, Walthamstow

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 2 November 2020 to Question 108223 on Sex and [Relationship Education](#): Religion, whether the materials published on the website, A Fertile Heart are permitted to be used in schools according to the Government guidance, Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum, published on 24 September 2020.

[Hansard source](#) Citation: HC Deb, 9 November 2020

Nick Gibb Minister of State (Education)

The Department remains committed to supporting all schools in their preparations to deliver the content of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) subjects.

It is for schools to decide which resources they choose to support the teaching of RSHE. The Department's 'Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum' implementation guidance, building on the content of the statutory RSHE guidance, includes clear advice on choosing resources: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.

The implementation guidance also advises schools to exercise caution when working with external agencies, including ensuring they have full confidence in any agency's approach and the resources it uses. The Department has stated that schools should not work with agencies that take extreme positions, and this should also be reflected in the school's choice of resources.

John Hayes Conservative, South Holland and The Deepings

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Education, if he will make an assessment of the role played by [LGBT+](#) advocacy groups in the delivery of sex education in primary schools.

[Hansard source](#) Citation: HC Deb, 16 September 2020

Nick Gibb Minister of State (Education)

The Department wants to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe and to equip them for adult life. That is why Relationships Education has been made compulsory for primary school pupils, Relationships and [Sex Education](#) (RSE) has been made compulsory for secondary school pupils, and Health Education compulsory for pupils in all state-funded schools.

The statutory duty to implement the new subjects from September 2020 has come into force. However, considering the current circumstances faced by schools, the Department is reassuring schools that they have flexibility over when they discharge their duty within the first year of compulsory teaching.

The content on Relationships Education for primary school pupils focuses on supporting children to have healthy relationships with their family and healthy friendships. It does not include content on sex education. If a primary school chooses to teach sex education, they will be required to publish a policy on this. Head teachers will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum.

All pupils should receive teaching on [LGBT](#) (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) content during their school years. Secondary schools should include LGBT content in their teaching. Primary schools can, when teaching about different types of families, include families with same-sex parents.

The statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education sets out clear advice on choosing resources. The guidance states that schools should assess each resource they intend to use to ensure that it is appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils and sensitive to their needs. Schools should also ensure that, when they consult parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use. Schools should also ensure that teaching delivered by external agencies or visitors fits with their planned programme and their published policy. It is important that schools discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils. Schools should ask to see the materials that external agencies or visitors will use as well as a lesson plan in advance, so that they can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (for example, special educational needs).

The statutory guidance can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.

In covering the content of the new subjects, the guidance also sets out schools' duty to comply with relevant requirements of the [Equality Act](#) (2010), including the Public Sector Equality Duty. Schools should also be aware of their duties regarding impartiality and balanced treatment of political issues in the classroom to ensure content is handled in an appropriate way.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath Labour

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether all resources recommended or promoted for use by schools by the [Department for Education](#) are checked for compliance with (1) safeguarding procedures, (2) the [Equality Act 2010](#), (3) the Public Sector Equality Duty, and (4) the statutory guidance on [Relationship Education](#), Relationship and [Sex Education](#) and Health Education.

Hansard source Citation: HL Deb, 5 August 2020

Baroness Berridge:

We want to support all young people to be happy, healthy, and safe. We also want to equip them for adult life and to make a positive contribution to society. That is why we are making Relationships Education compulsory for primary school-aged pupils, Relationships and [Sex Education \(RSE\)](#) compulsory for secondary school-aged pupils, and Health Education compulsory for pupils in all state-funded schools from September 2020.

In light of the circumstances caused by the [COVID-19](#) outbreak, and following engagement with the sector, the department is reassuring schools that although the subjects will still be compulsory from 1 September 2020, schools have flexibility over how they discharge their duty within the first year of compulsory teaching.

The safety of children is our top priority. We expect all schools to ensure that the materials and teaching resources they use are appropriate, and to ensure that they comply with their statutory duty to safeguard children's welfare. The statutory guidance sets out clear advice on choosing resources. Schools should assess each resource they intend to use to ensure that it is appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, and sensitive to their needs, where relevant. The department does not recommend specific resources but has suggested resources for schools to consider as set out in [Annex B](#) of the statutory guidance. We encourage schools to use resources that have been quality assured by reputable organisations, such as the [NSPCC](#) on safeguarding issues. The department will be providing further advice to schools on choosing appropriate resources and is developing teacher training modules for these subjects, which the department has quality assured and recommends.

Schools must consult with parents on the school's RSE policy. Schools should also ensure that, when they engage parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use, for example the books or materials they will use in lessons. The statutory guidance can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.

In covering the content of the new subjects, the guidance also sets out schools' duty to comply with relevant requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#) including the Public Sector Equality Duty. Schools should also be aware of their duties regarding impartiality and balanced treatment of political issues in the classroom to ensure content is handled in an appropriate way.

At the heart of these subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education. [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. The guidance can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>.

Lord Maginnis of Drumglass Independent Ulster Unionist

To ask Her Majesty's Government to what extent they expect explicit sexual and gender issues to be introduced in relationships education for six to 11 year olds in primary schools; and what plans they have to make a statement to both [Houses of Parliament](#) about this issue.

Citation: HL Deb, 29 July 2020

[Baroness Berridge](#) [Parliamentary Under-Secretary \(Department for International Trade\) \(Minister for Women\), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education](#)

Section 34 of The [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) requires regulations to be made to provide for Relationships Education for primary aged pupils and Relationships and [Sex Education \(RSE\)](#) for secondary aged pupils. This provision also specified that the regulations must include the circumstances in which pupils are to be excused from receiving RSE or elements thereof.

The Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education statutory guidance sets out the content to be covered for each subject. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education lessons. The key aim of Relationships Education for primary aged pupils is to put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds, starting with family and friends, and moving out to other kinds of relationships, including those off and online.

For secondary aged pupils the emphasis under the RSE curriculum moves from the experience of the child in the context of their family to the young person as a potential partner and parent, and the characteristics of healthy intimate relationships are explored. RSE will also cover the concepts of, and [laws](#) relating to sex and relationships.

There is no prescription for primary schools to cover sex education. If a primary school chooses to deliver sex education, it must be covered in the school's Relationships Education policy. Schools are required to consult parents on a draft of their policy. Where sex education is covered in primary schools, parents have an automatic right to withdraw their child from this part of the curriculum.

In making decisions about resources and materials to use in teaching the new subjects, the statutory guidance sets out that schools should assess each resource that they propose to use carefully to ensure it is appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils and sensitive to their needs. Schools should also be aware of their duties regarding impartiality and balanced treatment of political issues in the classroom to ensure content is handled in an appropriate way.

The statutory guidance states that when schools consult with parents on their Relationships Education and RSE policy, they should also ensure that they provide examples of the resources that they plan to use in teaching the new subjects as this can be reassuring for parents and enables them to continue the conversations started in class at home. The statutory guidance can be accessed via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.

We will be issuing further implementation guidance on the teaching of RSE and health education shortly.

[Jennette Arnold](#) [Labour](#)

In February, I was proud to propose a motion to the Assembly in support of LGBT+ inclusive relationships and sex education. However, in the context of [COVID-19](#), the Government is allowing schools to delay introducing this new element of the curriculum for a year. This makes the Assembly's call for you to provide strategic support even more crucial. Can you provide an update on how you will be supporting schools to deliver this crucial education even during these challenging times?

[Sadiq Khan](#) [Mayor of London](#)

I was heartened to see the Assembly pass this motion, having written last year to the [Secretary of State](#) for Education and all London head teachers to express my full support for statutory [LGBTQ+](#)-inclusive relationships education. On 9 July 2020, the Government updated its [FAQs](#) for Relationships Education, Relationships and [Sex Education \(RSE\)](#) and Health Education. These state that schools should start teaching the new curriculum in September 2020, and those

not yet ready must start by the summer term in 2021. My officers will liaise with schools and borough leads to understand their concerns regarding this and explore how we can support curriculum roll-out in London. I will also continue to take every opportunity to demonstrate my public support for LGBTQ+-inclusive relationships education.

Baroness Barker Liberal Democrat Lords Spokesperson (Voluntary Sector)

To ask Her Majesty's Government what resources have been requested by (1) teachers, (2) schools, and (3) teaching unions, to teach statutory Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education from September.

Citation: HL Deb, 18 June 2020

Baroness Berridge Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for International Trade) (Minister for Women), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education

We want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe. We also want to equip them for adult life and to make a positive contribution to society. We are making Relationships Education compulsory for primary school-age pupils, Relationships and Sex Education ([RSE](#)) compulsory for secondary school-age pupils and Health Education compulsory for pupils in all state-funded schools from September 2020.

Whilst it is important that the statutory duty to teach the new subject still comes into force in September, given the current circumstances faced by schools, the department will reassure schools that there will be some flexibility. Schools that are prepared to teach the subjects should begin teaching from September 2020. Schools that are not ready to teach the subjects should aim to start preparations as soon as possible and begin teaching no later than the start of the summer term in 2021.

The department is committed to supporting schools in their preparations and is currently developing a new online service featuring innovative training materials, an implementation guide, case studies and support to access resources. This support will cover all of the teaching requirements in the statutory guidance and will be inclusive to all pupils. This will be available in the summer term, with additional content added in the following months. Training will also be available for schools that need additional support. This will complement the online training materials and will be available through existing teaching schools' regional networks.

As part of the consultation on the draft regulations and statutory guidance, the department included a number of questions on school support and implementation. The responses to the consultation, including from expert organisations and teachers, demonstrated that teachers want to receive training to support the delivery of the new subjects. The government response to the consultation can be accessed via the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/780768/Government_Response_to_RSE_Consultation.pdf.

The department has also been working extensively with teachers, schools and subject experts throughout the development of these subjects, to assess the needs of schools. We have also been working closely with over 1,500 early adopter schools. This has informed our investment in a central package to help all schools to increase the confidence and quality of their teaching practice in these subjects.

In all schools, the religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that the topics that are included in the core content listed in the statutory guidance are appropriately handled. Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the [Equality Act 2010](#). The statutory guidance can be accessed via the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf.

Ofsted's school inspection handbook sets out that inspectors will consider the provision for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education as part of a wider judgment of pupils' personal development. Routine Ofsted school inspections are currently suspended in order to alleviate pressure on school leaders and staff at this challenging time, and there are no plans to lift the suspension this term. When routine inspections do re-start, inspectors will be sensitive to, and will take account of, the context and circumstances of schools. Further information on this will be made available in advance of any re-introduction of routine inspections.

Baroness Massey of Darwen Labour

To ask [Her Majesty's](#) Government what assessment they have made of the ability of schools to deliver the new compulsory elements of relationships and sex education curriculum from September 2020.

[The Question](#) was considered in a Virtual Proceeding via video call.

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

Baroness Berridge Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for International Trade) (Minister for Women), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education

My Lords, the Government have worked extensively with schools, teachers and experts throughout the development of these subjects. This has included working with over 1,500 early adopter schools to support their journey, learn lessons and share good practice. The department also conducted an impact assessment as part of the consultation. We are committed to supporting teachers, which is why we are investing in a programme of support featuring training materials, case studies and support to access resources.

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

Baroness Massey of Darwen Labour

I thank the [Minister](#) for that reply. Does she agree that relationships and sex education fosters self-esteem and social skills in children and young people as well as enhancing academic performance, and that those skills will be important when pupils return to school after a long absence? I welcome the Government's decision to include [RSE](#) in the compulsory curriculum, but how is this commitment supported precisely with resources and training? Could she give an example?

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

Baroness Berridge Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for International Trade) (Minister for Women), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education

My Lords, I agree with the noble Baroness that health and relationships education will be an essential part of re-socialising children as more go back to school from 1 June. A central school support package will be on offer, which will include training materials—both online and face-to-face where appropriate—and will be based on the “train the trainer” model. Schools can also access additional training support if they need particular help.

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020, c566

The Bishop of Durham Bishop

My Lords, I declare my interests as stated in the register as chair of the [National Society](#). In November, the Church of England produced a charter to support schools in preparing for the new compulsory elements of RSHE. It is important to us and our schools that we consult parents on how best to deliver this new material, to ensure that we provide a sensitive education enabling all pupils to flourish. Will [Her Majesty's](#) Government reassess the delivery date of the new elements of RSHE to accommodate the current constraints on schools' time and energy due to Covid-19?

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

Baroness Berridge Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for International Trade) (Minister for Women), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education

My Lords, I am grateful for the support, and in particular the charter, outlined by the right reverend Prelate. We are aware that there are a number of curriculum decisions that schools need to take. I reassure noble Lords that due consideration is being given to RSHE implementation and its implications for schools. We are working closely with the RSHE working group, which includes the teachers' unions and faith organisations. I undertake to keep the House updated.

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

Baroness Hollins Crossbench

My Lords, I declare my interests as set out in the register. What support is being provided to special schools? Are teachers in special schools well prepared to deliver relationships and sex education in a developmentally appropriate way and in a way that will support pupils' social, emotional and mental health?

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

Baroness Berridge Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for International Trade) (Minister for Women), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education

Yes, indeed, the attitude of the department is to embed SEND in every strand of the RSHE work, and we are working closely with the [Sex Education](#) Forum and NASEN to ensure that. We have also employed SEND experts to help with the development of the curriculum so that there will be specific resources in the school support package that I have outlined to assist teachers, most of whom have a child with SEND in their classroom.

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020, c567

Lord Watson of Invergowrie Shadow Spokesperson (Education)

My Lords, the guidance issued by the [Department for Education](#) last year stated that relationships and sex education should be “*part of the basic school curriculum ... which allows schools flexibility in developing their planned programme*”. But last week the Schools [Minister, Nick Gibb](#), stated that the department was giving due consideration to the implementation of the statutory relationships and sex education curriculum in the context of Covid-19. That suggested the possibility that implementation could be delayed due to the coronavirus, even if schools have returned by September. What process of due consideration was the Minister referring to and what additional support will the Government explore to ensure that [RSE](#) can be taught online if schools have not returned by September?

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

Baroness Berridge Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for International Trade) (Minister for Women), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education

My Lords, as the right reverend Prelate outlined, parents are required to be consulted as part of the process before a school introduces its policy to teach these subjects. I reiterate that we are prioritising operational discussions in relation to the curriculum and I will keep the House updated on any further developments.

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

Baroness Benjamin Liberal Democrat

My Lords, according to the government guidelines, parents need to have been consulted about the new relationships, sex and health education curriculum changes, so what expectations will there be for schools that have not been able to consult parents about the changes due to the coronavirus school closures?

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020, c568

Baroness Berridge Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for International Trade) (Minister for Women), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education

My Lords, the school support package that we will issue will enable schools and give them examples of best practice in order to consult parents. We have specifically produced leaflets so that they have the confidence to distribute that resource. In terms of the operational decisions in relation to the curriculum, I will update the House when there is any further information

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020, c568

Lord Polak Conservative

My Lords, I commend the department on producing sensitive and helpful guidance. The guidance makes it clear that from September, schools, in consultation with parents, will determine what is age-appropriate. Thus teaching explicitly about [LGBT+](#) matters is not mandatory for primary schools. But current Ofsted guidance and the practice of inspectors does not reflect that. Numerous primary schools have been downgraded in at least one category for not teaching LGBT. Will my noble friend confirm that Ofsted will inspect in line with DfE policy and not its own self-generated policies, and that primary schools will not be penalised if they do not teach LGBT, according to the wishes of the parents of a particular school?

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020, c568

Baroness Berridge Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for International Trade) (Minister for Women), The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education

My Lords, Ofsted has welcomed the department's guidance on RSHE and, when it is implemented in the next academic year, Ofsted will use it as a guide for assessing part of the personal development section of inspection. As my noble friend outlined, the guidance is clear that secondary schools should include [LGBT](#) content but, *"primary schools are strongly encouraged and enabled", when teaching about different types of relationships within families, to include families of same-sex parents. That is clearly a move from mandatory to permissive language. Obviously, the [Equality Act](#) is also enforced in schools and schools are required to take into account the other protected characteristics, including of course the religious background of students in the school.*

(Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020)

[Baroness Deech](#) [Crossbench](#)

Does the [Minister](#) share my anxiety that the opting-out provisions of the new law are so wide that children in faith schools may well be taken out of the sex education classes that they sorely need? All children need to learn to respect a variety of lifestyles, and learn how to look after themselves and avoid harmful practices such as [FGM](#). Children in very religious schools are the ones most vulnerable to ignorance and prejudice. What steps will the Minister take to avoid large numbers of parents removing their children from this education, and how will the Government help teachers contend with protesting parents?

Citation: HL Deb, 12 May 2020

[Caroline Lucas](#) [Green, Brighton, Pavilion](#)

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Education, what plans he has in place to enable early adopter schools of Relationships and [Sex Education](#) to feed back to his Department on (a) the effectiveness of its implementation and (b) whether further assistance is required to enable the teaching of high-quality lessons; and if he will make a statement.

Citation: HC Deb, 17 January 2020

[Nick Gibb](#) [Minister of State \(Education\)](#)

The Department is working with over 1600 schools who are acting as early adopters of Relationships Education; Relationships and [Sex Education](#) ([RSE](#)); and Health Education, and began teaching the new requirements from September 2019. We have been working with these early adopter schools to develop a programme of support. Recently four national conferences took place to help early adopters plan for delivery of the new subjects, and to learn about their current practices.

This engagement with early adopter schools is helping the Department develop its programme of support for the new subjects, which will be available to all teachers from spring 2020. The programme will focus on tools that improve schools' practice and will offer opportunities for teachers to improve subject knowledge, build confidence and share best practice. This support will be accessed through a new online service and will include an implementation guide, which will accompany the statutory guidance, case studies from early adopter schools, and innovative materials to support staff training. The Department will continue to test this package with early adopter schools.

[Paul Farrelly](#) [Labour, Newcastle-under-Lyme](#)

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that all schools teach every part of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

Citation: HC Deb, 7 October 2019

[Nick Gibb](#) [Minister of State \(Education\)](#)

We know that many schools choose to teach pupils about the Equality Act and the protected characteristics under that Act in the context of duties on schools, such as the requirements to promote both fundamental British values and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of their pupils. Schools are entitled to teach about the Equality Act in this context, and the Department thinks it is right that pupils leave school with a proper understanding of the importance of equality and respecting difference.

From September 2020 Relationships Education will be compulsory for all primary pupils and Relationships and [Sex Education](#) ([RSE](#)) will be compulsory for all secondary pupils. These subjects will give pupils the knowledge they need to stay safe and develop respectful, caring relationships of all kinds. The guidance on these subjects can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.