



FAQ – Relationships and Sex Education

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

Will my child be taught sex education at Primary School? Is this too young?

Sex Education at primary school is not compulsory. However, compulsory Relationships Education is being introduced in Primary schools from September 2020, to put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds. This will start with family and friends, how to treat each other with kindness, and recognising the difference between online and offline friendships.

Before Sex Education takes place, the school gives parents the opportunity to understand what will be taught, how it will be approached, and view any materials so that you understand what we propose to teach and how. If you continue to have concerns, you have the right to withdraw from any Sex Education lessons that go beyond that of the Science National Curriculum (which focuses on puberty and reproduction in Years 5 and 6 only).

Is school the best place for discussions about Sex and Relationships?

Studies of children have shown, that if they do not get the correct and accurate information about sex and relationships from a reliable source, they will find the information from other sources (friends, older siblings, website, TV) which may not be true or age appropriate. The information gathered during the Government consultation found that most children wanted this information and discussion to be provided in school with their teachers so that they could ask their questions in a safe space, and have them answered in an age-appropriate way.

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

In a Primary School, you have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the Science National Curriculum. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at Primary or Secondary school as the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

What will my child actually be taught in Sex Education?

The 'Changing Me' unit is taught over a period of 6 weeks in the second half of the summer term. Each year group will be taught appropriate to their age and developmental stage. Please note: at no point will a child be taught something that is inappropriate; and if a question from a child arises and the teacher feels it would be inappropriate to answer, (for example, because of its mature or explicit nature), the child will be encouraged to ask his/her parents or carers at home, and the question will not be answered to the child or class if it is outside the remit of that year group's programme.

- **Foundation** Growing up: how we have changed since we were babies
- **Year 1** Boys' and girls' bodies; naming body parts
- **Year 2** Boys' and girls' bodies; body parts and respecting privacy (which parts of the body are private and why this is)
- **Year 3** How babies grow and how boys' and girls' bodies change as they grow older
- **Year 4** Internal and external reproductive body parts, body changes in girls and menstruation
- **Year 5** Puberty for boys and girls, and conception
- **Year 6** Puberty for boys and girls and understanding conception to birth of a baby

All lessons are taught using simple, child-friendly language and pictures, which help children understand changes more effectively.

The key concepts that children learn in Jigsaw are inner strength, self-esteem and resilience. These are really important as they help keep children safe and it helps them make healthy decisions later in life. Accurate information is important but only part of the picture: help them now by building their inner resilience, so they become mindful children, mindful teenagers, and mindful adults.

Will these subjects promote LGBT relationships?

No, these subjects don't 'promote' anything, they educate. We are teaching about equality and 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. In our school the teaching of LGBT will be delivered through teaching about different types of family, including those with same sex parents. All our planned learning will be taught in an age appropriate way.

Are primary children too young to be taught about gay or lesbian people?

Some children grow up in families with gay or lesbian parents. We want all of our children to know that their family is normal and accepted in school. Our children will interact with people from different backgrounds we want them to treat all members of the community with the same respect. Just like racism, school has a duty of care to challenge any language that may cause offence to others, whether used intentionally or not. Phrases such as "that's so gay" or "that's a girls'/boys' toy" when used in a negative manner may unintentionally cause offence to a child or adult. School will challenge this language if it is used by children, parents or visitors as we want everyone to feel welcome.

In addition, we want our children to grow up as respectful and tolerant members of our community. As they grow up, make more friends, watch TV, go to different places they will meet people who are gay, lesbian or transgender. We want them to understand that this is okay that some children when they grow up may be gay. We don't want children growing up thinking something is wrong with them or with people they recognise who are gay or transgender.

My religion says that gay is wrong, so why are you teaching about different sexuality choices?

We are teaching about equality. We understand and respect all faiths. We recognise the tension that it can present. We are teaching children not to be afraid of difference but to celebrate difference. Any discussion or resources used will be to help your child be respectful and tolerant towards others. We are preparing the children for life in Britain and the wider world. Britain specifically, is diverse and they are going to meet people who are different to them as they grow up. To reiterate, we are not persuading or coercing choices, we are educating the children to be respectful and accepting of all walks of life.

As a parent it is your right to talk to your child about religious beliefs. In school we build our curriculum around UK law. We are teaching children that all people and relationships are equal. We are teaching children that all families are different and your child as they grow up are going to meet people who live in different families. It is important that children learn about people who are different. They need to learn to be tolerant and respectful of people with different views. When they grow up they can make up their own minds about what is right and wrong.

What are the topics covered in RSE?

In school RSE topics will be taught within our Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. RSE is part of the following two categories.

Relationships	Health and Mental Well-Being
Families and People Who Care for Me	Mental Wellbeing
Caring Friendships	Internet Safety and Harm
Respectful Friendships	Physical Health and Fitness
Online Relationships	Healthy Eating
Being Safe	Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco
	Health and Prevention
	Basic First Aid
	Changing Adolescent Body

Will this work prompt my children to ask challenging questions?

Possibly, your child or children trust you and will be likely to ask you questions to test your beliefs and opinions. Please don't avoid them, talk openly about diversity and equality.

How do I explain what 'gay' means to my child?

'Gay' is when a man loves a man. 'Lesbian' is when two women love each other. 'Bi sexual' is when a person can love both men and women. 'Transgender' is when a person feels different about the body they were born into; we are all assigned a gender at birth and sometimes when we get older we may feel differently about this. When two brothers or sisters love each other, it doesn't mean they are gay. This is different kind of love. We may love our mum but we don't want to marry them. Some people grow up and fall in love with a person of the same gender. Some people say there are 'boy' things or 'girl things' but we say this is not the case and boys and girls can do the same sort of things if they want.

Below are some examples of the teaching materials/slides we use to teach 'celebrating difference' from our Jigsaw PSHE programme:

Ages 7-8 Celebrating Difference

This lesson offers many images and asks children, 'Which pictures show a family?' thus opening a discussion on what makes a family and concluding that what is important is that we are loved and cared for, whatever our family composition.



Ages 5-6 Relationships

This lesson uses cartoon characters from Planet Zarg to suggest there are many different sorts of families.



Children as individuals

In the same way that Jigsaw approaches all family compositions as of equal value, it also considers every child of equal value.

Some children in primary school may feel they are different in some way. This difference may be about their developing sexuality or gender identity, but equally, it may be about appearance, body-image, achievements, language, accent or any number of perceived differences.

The second Puzzle (unit) in the Jigsaw Programme for all year groups, called Celebrating Difference, is all about similarity and difference; the underpinning aim being to help children love and accept themselves for who they are and build a positive relationship with self and with others.

There is no direct teaching about children themselves being heterosexual or LGBT+, rather each child is treated as a valued individual.

We simply believe it is important that children understand that individuality is positive and not a source of negativity, thereby leading to acceptance and respect for self and others.

As they explore who they are and their sexuality and gender identity become more apparent to them, this will then be received in a positive way, without fear.

Jigsaw's ages 3-11 programme does not explicitly teach about heterosexual or LGBT+ relationships in adulthood either, other than to explain that any two adults can love each other and be attracted to each other.

The ages 3-11 Jigsaw Programme nurtures respect and acceptance for all, focussing on the characteristics of positive, healthy relationships children themselves will be experiencing e.g. family and friends.