

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and home learning

This briefing provides an opportunity for schools to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of providing home learning activities for RSE during the coronavirus. Schools are advised to make a decision based on the needs of their school community.

RSE includes many themes that contribute to children's wellbeing and safety. It helps them to understand their bodies, manage risk and influence, and develop resilience and healthy relationships. Whilst at home, and in the absence of formal RSE teaching, young people may turn to inappropriate sources of information or experience pubertal body changes that they don't understand and with which they need some help and support.

The PSHE Association have developed some guidance [on adapting PSHE for home learning during school closures](#) and how to do this safely. It advises caution when considering whether or not to provide lessons for home learning around a range of sensitive subjects.

Some themes can trigger distress with some young people. Some parents and carers may be uncomfortable with some of the subject matter. They may lack confidence in discussing more sensitive themes. It may be the first time they've had a more in depth look at the content of the RSE curriculum and may have questions or concerns about its age appropriateness. Pre-COVID-19 schools would often address these issues face to face with parents in order to offer reassurance and support.

Here are some different approaches and resources that schools may want to consider.

- Focus on less sensitive areas of RSE such as mental wellbeing, self-care, e-safety and security, keeping connected with friends, developing hobbies and interests etc. whilst pupils are not in school. The teaching of some more explicit RSE could be postponed, and planning for the next academic year in order to deliver this learning when pupils are back in school.
- Check out the PSHE Association [puberty home learning activities for KS2 and KS3](#). They have been developed resources in recognition that preparation for puberty is an important factor to cover for pupils.
- Provide a simple book list to parents, allowing them to choose material they and their child would feel most comfortable with to initiate conversations about growing and changing. For an example, Long Row Primary have listed such books for parent on their [website](#). Books for secondary pupils can be found [here](#). (Please note the books listed have not been vetted by the local authority, they are for parents to choose at their discretion.)
- Signpost to websites providing advice and information for parents wanting to actively engage in their child's sex and relationships education. <https://sexedrescue.com/> <https://www.outspokeneducation.com> (to be used at parents own discretion.)
- Ensure older pupils have information about sexual health services by signposting to the [Derbyshire Sexual Health Service](#) (which includes an anonymous chat feature as well as information about virtual services), or the [School Health Team](#).
- Ensure pupils have pathways to voice their concerns and to ask for help and support. As well as named staff at school, signpost to [ChildLine](#), [Young Minds](#), or the [Kooth](#) service.
- Consider pupils who may be experiencing 'period poverty'. If your school have not yet signed up for free menstruation products provided by the government to meet this need you can do so [here](#). This [article](#) gives an example of how a school is continuing to supply the products during lockdown.

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