

## **Frequent Concerns:**

### **1. My child will be taught sexually explicit language and shown pornographic images at far too young an age.**

Pupils should have a common language in the formal classroom to describe genitals, not the colloquialisms of the playground or perhaps from home, but the precise, scientific terms, free of embarrassment. This helps to safeguard them as it enables staff to teach about safe and unsafe forms of touching and that certain parts of our body are private. This empowers pupils to explain unambiguously to a trusted adult if someone is touching them inappropriately.

The diagrams used in schools to teach sex education lessons, or lessons about the naming of body parts are never intended to stimulate sexual excitement but rather to teach pupils about their bodies and which parts are private. Real photographs are never used, but rather diagrams and factual terms.

### **2. My young child is going to be in a lesson where "gay relationships" are being actively promoted.**

As with all school provision, RHE lessons must be delivered in line with the requirements of the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Most schools' values, in line with British values, espouse mutual tolerance and respect, promoting good relations between people of different protected characteristics, including sexual orientation. 'Families can include, for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers, amongst other structures.' (DfE guidance). Removing all stigmatisation of children who come from different home circumstances is vitally important, and this is a key theme within the new curriculum.

### **3. My young child will be forced to attend sex education lessons in class and there is nothing I can do about that.**

The statutory guidance is clear: 'Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of the statutory RSHE...Headteachers will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools.'

The school's content and delivery of all parts of the RSHE curriculum is designed to meet the needs of pupils at their age and stage in development. If a pupil is removed from sex education, there is always the risk that they may seek information from elsewhere, perhaps from friends in the playground, and that this advice may be incomplete or even misleading.

### **4. What is being taught to my child goes against my faith and the faith of my family.**

Every school is advised to deliver the RHE content in a balanced and non-judgemental way, and in line with the school's values, which are likely to include tolerance and mutual respect of other people's beliefs, reflecting British values. The statutory guidance is clear: 'The religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that topics are appropriately handled.'

### **5. My child is too young to know about puberty. My son doesn't need to know about girls' periods.**

The DfE guidance states that teaching about puberty and menstruation should be covered before onset. As some pupils will begin puberty from as young as age seven, this means that puberty and menstruation education needs to start in Year 4, in a way that is age-appropriate.

The statutory guidance requires that: 'male and female pupils are prepared for changes they and their peers will experience.'

### **6. Is school the best place for discussions about Sex and Relationships?**

We know from surveys of children, 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.

### **7. 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.

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.