

Press release

Review of relationships, sex and health education to protect children to conclude by end of year

Review to be informed by expert panel, in response to concerning reports of inappropriate content being taught

From:

[Department for Education \(/government/organisations/department-for-education\)](#), [The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP \(/government/people/gillian-keegan\)](#), and [The Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP \(/government/people/kemi-badenoch\)](#)

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New Relationships, Sex, Health and Education (RSHE) statutory guidance will be completed by the end of the year, in response to disturbing reports that inappropriate material is being taught in some schools.

The review is needed to make sure all children are protected from inappropriate content in all cases, even if many schools already teach RSHE and engage parents in a positive way.

The review, which was recently accelerated by the Prime Minister and Education Secretary, will be informed by an independent panel to be appointed over the coming weeks to provide external expertise. The panel will bring together input from health, children's development, curriculum and safeguarding. The review will also draw on close work with Ofsted, to understand what material is currently used in the classroom, and consider what improvements might need to be made.

The panel will advise on how to put in place clear safeguards to stop pupils from being taught contested and potentially damaging concepts, including introducing age ratings setting out what is appropriate to be taught at what age, to prevent children being taught concepts they are too young to understand.

[Oak National Academy \(https://www.thenational.academy/\)](https://www.thenational.academy/), the independent provider of freely available online curriculum and lesson resources, will develop curriculum materials to make sure every school can access high-quality, compliant resources which will build on what is already available for schools. This will help support teachers as they develop their curriculum and lesson planning in this sensitive area.

The Education Secretary has also today written to schools to remind them they are required by law to publish a [relationships or a relationships and sex education policy \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education) and consult parents on it, and should also provide all curriculum materials to parents and stop entering into contracts that seek to prevent parents from seeing materials.

Education Secretary, Gillian Keegan said:

“ I am deeply concerned about reports of inappropriate lessons being taught in schools.

“ This urgent review will get to the heart of how RSHE is currently taught and should be taught in the future. This will leave no room for any disturbing content, restore parents’ confidence, and make sure children are even better protected.”

The letter makes clear that parents should be able to view all curriculum materials, and that parents can ask to see material if it has not already been shared, especially in relation to sensitive topics.

The review will also consider how to make sure all RSHE teaching is factual and does not present contested views on sensitive topics as fact.

It will also engage widely with those working with children across the education and health sectors.

The government is determined to make sure RSHE teaching leaves children equipped to make informed decisions about their health, wellbeing and relationships, in a sensitive way that reflects their stage of development.

The government expects new statutory guidance to be released in the coming months. It will then be subject to public consultation to conclude by the end of the year, coming into statutory force as soon as possible after that.

Separately, the Education Secretary, working with the Minister for Women and Equalities, will publish guidance for schools for the summer term on how to respond to children who are questioning their gender identity.

DfE enquiries

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