

Why is RSE & PSHE important?

RSE & PSHE education helps pupils maintain their mental and physical health and understand the various factors that influence their wellbeing. They learn how to build strong and supportive relationships, how to keep themselves safe in various situations and how to make thoughtful decisions about money, health and the online world.

Pupils may receive mixed messages about these topics from friends, siblings, social media and the wider world. High-quality RSE & PSHE ensures every child receives clear, accurate and age-appropriate teaching so they can make safe and informed choices as they grow.

When does Kapow Primary's RSE & PSHE curriculum cover puberty and menstruation?

Pupils learn how bodies change as they grow in the Growing up units in Years 2, 4 and 5. This understanding is revisited and built on through a spiral curriculum. In Year 4, teaching explicitly covers the changes during adolescence, including menstruation, and introduces the term 'puberty'.

What terminology does Kapow Primary use when teaching about puberty, menstruation and birth?

The content, language and sequencing of Kapow Primary's RSE & PSHE curriculum were carefully chosen to be age-appropriate and inclusive. A key principle is the deliberate use of neutral, factual language to prevent stigma and avoid outdated or potentially judgmental terms. Examples of this approach include:

- Menstrual products or period products instead of 'sanitary products'.
- Correct scientific names are used for body parts, avoiding slang or euphemisms.
- Neutral language is used when discussing birth, such as avoiding the term 'natural birth', to respectfully acknowledge the diversity of birthing methods.

These choices promote respectful, inclusive teaching and help to eliminate value judgments.

When does Kapow Primary's RSE & PSHE scheme introduce and name the private body parts?

Kapow Primary RSE & PSHE introduces the correct names for external private body parts in Years 1 and 2. This helps pupils understand that these are ordinary body parts, recognise that they are private and feel confident using accurate language if they need to talk to a trusted adult. Teaching correct anatomical terms is also an important safeguarding measure, as it enables and empowers children to clearly report concerns.

Is sex education compulsory in primary school?

No. While primary schools are not mandated to teach sex education, the statutory guidance suggests its inclusion in Year 5 and/or Year 6. This aligns with the Science National curriculum content on conception and birth.

Which lessons can parents withdraw their child from?

Parents may request to withdraw their child from the optional, non-statutory Year 6 Sex education unit within Kapow Primary's RSE & PSHE scheme.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from the following statutory components:

- Relationships education.
- Health education.
- Science lessons, including learning about puberty or human reproduction taught through Science.
- Any other PSHE content the school has chosen to include, such as citizenship or financial literacy.

What if a parent wants to withdraw their child from the Growing up units?

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from the Growing up units. These lessons form part of statutory Relationships Education and Health Education, which all pupils are required to receive.

Is sexual orientation addressed in the RSE & PSHE scheme?

Sexual orientation is not taught as a discrete concept. However, same-sex relationships are represented naturally within lessons about family life and relationships. When pupils learn about different types of families, the statutory guidance recommends that schools include same-sex parents alongside other family arrangements and this is reflected in the scheme.

The curriculum addresses marriage and civil partnership in line with statutory guidelines, teaching pupils that they are formal, legally recognised commitments between two people.

Is gender identity addressed in Kapow Primary's RSE & PSHE scheme?

No, gender identity or gender reassignment is not explicitly taught in the Kapow Primary RSE & PSHE scheme. This approach reflects current statutory guidance for primary schools.

Pupils are taught to respect differences and treat others with kindness and dignity across the curriculum. This includes learning to challenge gender stereotypes, recognise unfair assumptions and understand that people may express themselves in different ways.

Does the Kapow Primary RSE & PSHE scheme address the protected characteristics?

Yes, the scheme supports pupils' understanding of fairness, respect and inclusion in ways appropriate to primary-aged children. This approach aligns with statutory RSE guidance, which requires schools to promote respect and prevent discrimination without introducing complex or contested concepts in ways that are not developmentally appropriate.

In Upper key stage 2, protected characteristics are referred to in context to support pupils' understanding of discrimination. They are not explored in detail, taught as a list or assessed. The emphasis remains on respectful behaviour, challenging prejudice and understanding that people should be treated fairly, regardless of difference.

Does the scheme address child-on-child abuse?

Kapow Primary supports schools' preventative work around child-on-child abuse through curriculum teaching that focuses on respect, boundaries, inclusion and help-seeking. This approach aligns with the statutory Relationships and Health Education guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Across the curriculum, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes that help prevent a wide range of child-on-child abuse, including bullying, discrimination, coercive behaviour, boundary-crossing and other early harmful behaviours.

How is healthy eating taught?

Kapow Primary's healthy eating progression and lessons were developed in collaboration with a qualified nutritionist. This ensures that the content is accurate, age-appropriate and closely aligned with the statutory RHE guidance. Consequently, statutory terms such as 'calories' and 'obesity' are included and taught carefully in a factual, non-judgemental and age-appropriate way.

Which parts of the curriculum are statutory and which are non-statutory?

In primary schools, Relationships and Health Education are statutory. This means all pupils must be taught this content. Statutory RHE includes learning about:

- Families and friendships.
- Respectful relationships.
- Online safety.
- Mental wellbeing.
- Physical health.
- Puberty.
- Basic first aid.

The following areas are non-statutory, meaning schools can choose whether and how to teach them:

- Citizenship.
- Optional Year 6 Sex education.
- Optional Year 6 First aid.

These units reflect non-statutory guidance and support pupils' wider personal development.