

Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education research report

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Summary:

This report presents the findings from a qualitative research study carried out by Ipsos MORI and the PSHE Association, on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE). This study aimed to understand how schools across a range of contexts approached the development and delivery of their current PSHE curriculum, as well as any specific considerations that may have been given to teaching the topics outlined in the new RSHE statutory requirements.

Key considerations for teaching specific RSHE topics

- schools should create a safe learning environment that allows complex issues to be taught and handled safely and respectfully
- by providing a shared language (or alternative mode of communication), schools will normalise talking about mental health and wellbeing with others
- an age- appropriate, supportive narrative should be created around mental health and wellbeing
- when teaching about mental health and wellbeing, schools need to provide pupils with a language to talk about how they are feeling as well as recognise and talk about how others are feeling
- pupils with special educational needs may find it harder to express themselves through language and schools should have strategies in place to support all children. These should allow pupils to choose the mode of communication that best suited their needs
- schools should adopt a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, including but not limited to the PSHE education curriculum
- schools should embed LGBT experiences throughout the PSHE education curriculum and broader school curriculum weaving them into other lessons and activities (e.g. story time for younger pupils), rather than, for example, teaching LGBT as a stand-alone PSHE lesson
- schools should use more inclusive language e.g. gender neutral terminology such as referring to people's partners rather than boyfriend or girlfriend. This use of inclusive language helped teach pupils the appropriate language to use when talking about different types of families and relationships, and helps promote normalising the conversation around differences