

FAQs

1. Does the new DfE statutory Relationships and Health Guidance replace PSHE?

No. It is recommended that it be delivered within a wider PSHE curriculum, as Spetisbury has chosen to do. The SCARF programme that we will be teaching covers all the vital elements of PSHE such as the rights of the child, caring for the environment, economic education, and parts of British Values and SMSC along with the statutory Relationships and Health content.

2. Does Spetisbury have to teach children about LGBT+ families?

Yes. The statutory guidance states that schools must teach about families of many forms and this includes LGBT parents. We will be talking about LGBT+ relationships and families in an age-appropriate way in RHE. All people and loving families, including those who are LGBT+, have much to give society. Schools have a duty to present modern British society and educate children and young people about diversity, inclusion, and equality for all groups, including faith groups, as mentioned in the Equality Act 2010. Pupil- and student-sensitive RHE can also be used to make sure other children and young people from minority groups not mentioned in the 2010 Act are included and valued too; children such as looked after children.

3. What is the rationale for teaching younger children the vocabulary for external male and female genitalia?

Safeguarding children and young people is a very important element of RHE. An example of how schools can help children express themselves clearly is the use of accepted shared language; the words 'vulva' and 'penis' as external organs do not lead to a child understanding a sexual act, but does give them an easily understood, common vocabulary should they need to explain something in everyday life or something that has happened to them that they did not like. Parents/carers are of course able to use family names for various parts of their body at home, but in schools 'proper' or scientific words will be used.

4. When will menstruation be taught?

The statutory guidance states puberty should be covered in Health Education and should be addressed before onset so, as far as possible; pupils are prepared in advance for changes they will experience. Best practice states that menstruation education should be delivered to both boys and girls, as learning about menstruation is a concept of reproduction (as covered by the national curriculum for science) and fosters good relationships by breaking down the stigma of going through these changes, leading to less bullying and increased empathy. The NHS states that girls as young as 8 years old can start menstruating. Children turn 8 in Year 3, so it is a timely point for them to receive the information before the changes potentially take place.

5. Are pupils' religious beliefs going to be considered when teaching RHE?

Schools should be mindful of all their pupils' backgrounds when teaching RHE, whatever that may be. Although we are a Church of England school, our commitment to respecting differing faith groups, as well as other backgrounds our pupils may have ensures that our RSHE is good quality as well as faith- and student-sensitive. It is important that whilst faith is respected and also talked about in RSHE, so are other belief systems and RSHE should be sensitive to pupils or students from all differing backgrounds.