



The New Relationships Education (Primary) Guidance Statutory from September 2026

Parent & Carer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

➤ What is the 2026 RSHE guidance?

The 2026 RSHE guidance from the Department for Education sets out what **all primary schools must teach** in Relationships and Health Education. It builds on previous guidance and reflects:

- Children's real-life experiences
- The importance of wellbeing and safeguarding
- Online and digital safety
- Skills children need to manage relationships as they grow

➤ What is the purpose of Relationships Education in primary school?

The purpose is to help children:

- Build **kind, respectful relationships**
- Understand **friendships and family life**
- Learn how to **manage feelings and conflict**
- Know how to **stay safe**, including online
- Understand **boundaries, privacy, and body ownership**
- Feel confident asking for **help and support**

It is about **preparing children for life**, not about sex.

➤ Is Relationships Education compulsory?

Yes. Relationships Education is **statutory in all primary schools**. Schools must teach it in an age-appropriate way that supports pupils' wellbeing and safety.

➤ Does the 2026 guidance include sex education?

No. The 2026 primary guidance **does not cover sexual activity as a statutory element**.

However, the guidance recommends that primary schools teach sex education in years 5 and / or 6 in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science.

At Carnforth Community Primary we will be offering non-statutory sex education in Year 6. Parents can request withdrawal from this separate, non-statutory content, although we would request and encourage you to have a conversation with staff in school before making this decision. Parents cannot withdraw their child from Relationships Education itself.

➤ What will my child learn about families?

Children will learn that:

- Families provide love, care, and security
- Families can look different, and that is normal
- Healthy family relationships help children feel safe
- It is okay to ask for help if something at home feels wrong

Teaching is **inclusive and respectful** so that no child feels judged or excluded.

➤ Why does the guidance talk about boundaries and body ownership?

Learning about boundaries helps children:

- Understand that **their body belongs to them**
- Know what behaviour is appropriate and inappropriate
- Feel confident saying no
- Know how and where to seek help

This is a **safeguarding measure**, not sexualised content.

At Carnforth Community Primary School we use resources from the NSPCC such as the PANTS resource (<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/pants>), as well as our curriculum lessons from Coram SCARF.

➤ Does the guidance teach children about abuse?

Children are taught, in an **age-appropriate and sensitive way**, how to:

- Recognise unsafe behaviour
- Understand that abuse is **never their fault**
- Know who trusted adults are
- Report worries or concerns

Lessons focus on **protection and confidence**, not graphic detail.

At Carnforth Community Primary School we use resources from the NSPCC such as the Speak Out. Stay Safe. resource, as well as our curriculum lessons from Coram SCARF.

➤ Why is online safety included?

Online activity is part of children's everyday lives. The guidance helps children to:

- Be respectful online

- Understand that people online may not be who they say they are
- Know not to share personal information or images
- Understand that online content can sometimes be upsetting
- Know what to do if something online makes them uncomfortable

This supports children to stay **safe and sensible online**.

➤ Will children be taught about pornography or sharing images?

The guidance allows schools to address these topics **only if relevant**, and only in a way that is:

- Age-appropriate
- Carefully worded
- Focused on safety and reassurance

Parents will be **informed in advance** if this is necessary due to local or pupil needs.

➤ Will my child be asked to share personal experiences?

No. Children are **never expected or required** to talk about their own experiences or family life. Teaching uses:

- General examples
- Stories and scenarios
- Discussion at a safe, general level

Children are told they can speak privately to a trusted adult if needed. At Carnforth Community Primary School children are encouraged to highlight three trusted adults that they can talk to if something is worrying them, this is reviewed termly.

➤ How does the guidance support emotional wellbeing?

The 2026 guidance places greater emphasis on:

- Managing feelings such as anger, disappointment, or loneliness
- Understanding that everyone feels lonely sometimes
- Building self-respect and confidence
- Learning healthy ways to resolve disagreements

This supports children's **mental and emotional health**.

At Carnforth Community Primary School we use The Zones of Regulation Curriculum to support emotional wellbeing and regulation which complements the RSHE guidance, along with lessons from Coram SCARF.

➤ Does the guidance promote specific beliefs or lifestyles?

No. The guidance promotes **respect, kindness, and safety**. It recognises that:

- Families and beliefs vary
- Schools should not undermine family values

- Teaching should be factual, inclusive, and respectful

➤ How are parents involved?

Schools are expected to:

- Publish an RSHE policy
- Share curriculum information with parents
- Communicate clearly about sensitive content
- Work in partnership with families

Parents are encouraged to **ask questions and share concerns**.

At Carnforth Community Primary School we have all PSHE and RSHE information on our school website, including our curriculum and share information regarding key elements of RSHE learning on the relevant ClassDojo Pages.

➤ What should I do if I want to know more or have concerns?

You can:

- Contact your child's class teacher
- Speak with the RSHE lead or senior staff
- Request to view teaching materials
- Discuss how content is taught and supported

Schools welcome **open and respectful dialogue**.

At Carnforth Community Primary School our PSHE and RSHE Lead is Megan Rae, our Curriculum Lead is Louise Carbert and our Headteacher is Sarah Hudd.

➤ What is the overall aim of the 2026 RSHE guidance?

To ensure children:

- Feel safe and valued
- Build healthy relationships
- Understand boundaries and respect
- Know how to seek help
- Grow into kind, confident young people