

# NORTHUMBERLAND

## C O U N T Y C O U N C I L

**West End Primary School**  
**Ridge Terrace, Bedlington, Northumberland, NE22 6EB.**  
**Telephone (01670) 822328**  
**Fax (01670) 829448**  
**Email Address: [admin@westend.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@westend.northumberland.sch.uk)**  
**Web Site: [www.westend.northumberland.sch.uk](http://www.westend.northumberland.sch.uk)**

**Mrs J Bushell, BA Hons, Headteacher**

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As you know, The Department for Education announced changes to Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE). These changes came into effect from September 2021 and all schools will be **required** to comply with the updated requirements, making Relationships Education **compulsory** for all pupils receiving primary education. It has been 20 years since the last review of these curriculum areas, and in that time the world has changed significantly. Children now face new challenges: they have to process lots of information from different sources such as TV, the internet, social media, understand how society is changing, understand risks they may face, all putting pressure on their physical and mental health.

At West End Primary School we welcome the new statutory curriculum. It is crucial to teach children how to be happy, healthy and safe in our ever changing modern world and we take this responsibly very seriously! The main focus of RSHE in primary schools is all about what healthy relationships are. For example being a good friend, what the characteristics of a family are, what is acceptable and unacceptable in a relationship and making sure the children understand how to safeguard themselves from unreasonable or unacceptable behaviour. These lessons, as always, are taught in an age appropriate way.

\*Children within Years Reception - Yr4 **will not** be taught about sex!

\*Children within Y5 and Y6 **will be** taught about puberty, which is a **compulsory component** of their Science and Health Education.

\*Children within Y5 and Y6 **will be** taught about reproduction of human and animals which is a **compulsory component** of their science education.

\*Children in Y5 and Y6 **will be** taught the facts about human reproduction including:

\*That for a baby to begin to grow, part comes from a mother and part comes from a father; that in most animals including humans the baby grows inside the mother.

\*That when a sperm and egg meet, this is called conception; that conception occurs as a result of sexual intercourse, and what sexual intercourse means.

\*How a baby develops in the womb and how babies are born



This forms part of our **non-statutory sex education**, however we feel the children need to understand the facts of human reproduction before moving on to secondary school.

At the end of the Summer Term, we invited you to complete our RSHE (Relationships and Sex Education) Parental Consultation and would like to thank you for taking part. The purpose of the consultation was to gather feedback on our reviewed RSHE curriculum and also share with parents and carers what the curriculum will look like entering the academic year 2021-2022. We have now reviewed these responses, and made some slight adjustments to our draft policy to reflect your feedback.

I would like to thank the parents and carers who took the time to submit responses and completed the questionnaire. The responses gathered from parents were highly positive about the proposed changes to our curriculum as well as providing some valuable information on how to make parents feel more at ease with the new **statutory** expectations.

Within the consultation, it was a consensus amongst parents that they would like to be regularly informed of the RSHE teaching within the classroom and, if appropriate, be provided with additional information regarding subjects of a sensitive nature.

Therefore the outcome of the consultation has informed us to take the following measures:

\*The RSHE long-term planning for each year group is available to access all year via our school website and parents will be notified of any changes.

\*Parents will be regularly informed of RSHE teaching via each year group's topic webs that are sent out every half-term and are available to view via the school website.

\*Half-term planning will be available to view on the school website which will detail a week by week view of each year group's RSHE teaching.

\*When teaching sensitive topics, such as Puberty (Y5/6), the scientific teaching of reproduction and how human and animal babies are made (Y5/6- Compulsory science objectives), or the NSPCC PANTS lesson additional material will be shared with parents prior to and after teaching. This is to support parents in holding informed conversations with their children and answering any questions the children may have in an age appropriate way.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and carers that RSHE is now **compulsory** in Primary school.

Parents **do** have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE.

Parents **do not** have the right to withdraw their children from statutory relationships education, health education or the science curriculum.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs J.Bushell

