

Department for Education 2025 updated statutory guidance on Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education.

Primary School Governor Checklist

RSE / PSHE – DfE 2025 Guidance

Implementation deadline: **September 2026**

1. Governor Statutory Responsibilities

Governors must ensure the school complies with statutory guidance from the **Department for Education**.

- ✓ School teaches **Relationships Education (statutory in primary)**
- ✓ School teaches **Health Education (statutory in primary)**
- ✓ Governing body has **approved the RSE / PSHE policy**
- ✓ Policy is **reviewed regularly (recommended every 2–3 years)**
- ✓ Governors understand **which elements are statutory and which are optional**

Key knowledge for governors

Primary schools **must teach**:

- Relationships Education
- Health Education

Primary schools **do not have to teach Sex Education**, but many choose to include **age-appropriate content (e.g. puberty in Year 5/6)**.

Parents **cannot withdraw** children from:

- Relationships Education
- Health Education

Parents **can request withdrawal from non-statutory sex education** if taught.

2. Policy and Compliance Checklist

Governors should check the school has:

- ✓ A **written RSE / PSHE policy**
- ✓ Evidence of **parent consultation** when policy is written or updated
- ✓ Clear statement of **parents' right to withdraw from sex education**
- ✓ Clear **curriculum outline by year group or key stage**

- ✓ Links with **safeguarding policy** and **behaviour policy**
 - ✓ Clear description of **how PSHE is delivered (PSHE lessons / assemblies / cross-curricular)**
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3. Primary Curriculum Content (What Must Be Taught)

Governors should know the **key themes pupils must learn**.

Families and relationships

- ✓ Different types of families
 - ✓ Caring and respectful relationships
 - ✓ Friendship and kindness
 - ✓ Respect for others
 - ✓ Bullying and how to get help
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Safety and boundaries

- ✓ Personal boundaries
 - ✓ Appropriate and inappropriate touch
 - ✓ Keeping safe online
 - ✓ Understanding privacy
 - ✓ How to report concerns to trusted adults
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Health and wellbeing

- ✓ Mental health and emotional wellbeing
 - ✓ Physical health and healthy lifestyles
 - ✓ Hygiene
 - ✓ Basic understanding of puberty (KS2)
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4. Key Areas Emphasised in the 2025 Guidance

Governors should ensure the curriculum includes:

- ✓ **Online safety and digital relationships**
- ✓ **Understanding consent and personal boundaries** (age appropriate)
- ✓ **Recognising unsafe situations**
- ✓ **Use of correct anatomical language for body parts**
- ✓ **Respect, kindness and inclusion**

The guidance places **greater emphasis on safeguarding and protecting children from online and peer risks**.



5. Safeguarding Links

Relationships and Health Education supports safeguarding.

Governors should ensure:

- ✓ Curriculum helps children **recognise abuse or unsafe behaviour**
- ✓ Pupils know **who trusted adults are**
- ✓ Staff know **how to manage disclosures from pupils**
- ✓ Content links with **Keeping Children Safe in Education**

RSHE is considered a **preventative safeguarding curriculum**.

6. Monitoring Questions for Governors

Governors should ask school leaders:

Curriculum

- How is PSHE planned from **EYFS to Year 6?**
- How do we ensure content is **age appropriate?**
- How are **online safety risks addressed?**

Staff confidence

- Are teachers **trained to teach sensitive topics?**
- Do staff receive **regular PSHE / safeguarding training?**

Parent communication

- How are parents **informed about curriculum content?**
- When was the **last parent consultation?**

Impact

- How do we know pupils **feel safe and know how to seek help?**
 - What does **pupil voice** tell us about PSHE?
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7. Evidence Governors Should See

Governors should request:

- ✓ RSE / PSHE policy
- ✓ Curriculum overview or progression map
- ✓ Parent consultation records

- ✓ Staff training records
 - ✓ Monitoring reports from PSHE lead
 - ✓ Pupil voice or survey results
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8. Timeline

Year	Action
2025	Updated statutory guidance published
2025–2026	Schools update policies and curriculum
September 2026	New requirements fully implemented

9. Red Flags Governors Should Watch For

- ▶ No RSE/PSHE policy
 - ▶ Parents not consulted
 - ▶ Curriculum missing online safety
 - ▶ Staff lack confidence teaching content
 - ▶ Governors not monitoring the subject
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10. Best Practice for Governing Boards

Many schools appoint a **PSHE / Safeguarding link governor** who:

- ✓ Meets the PSHE lead annually
- ✓ Reviews curriculum delivery
- ✓ Reports findings to the governing body