



Department  
for Education

# **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education in England**

**Government consultation response**

**February 2019**

# Contents

Introduction	3
Guiding principles – the rationale for government’s approach to Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education	5
Consultation exercise	7
Context of response	8
Summary of responses	10
Relationships Education at primary	10
Relationships and Sex Education at secondary	13
Health Education	14
Age-appropriateness	15
Parental engagement / Right to be excused from sex education (commonly known as right to withdraw)	16
Flexibility	17
SEND	18
School Support and implementation	19
Financial Education	20
Regulations	21
Regulatory Impact Assessment	21
Next steps	23
Annex A: Ipsos MORI Executive Summary	29
Executive summary	29
Background to the consultation	29
Relationships Education in Primary Schools	31
Relationships and Sex Education in Secondary Schools	32
LGBT	33
Health Education	33
Right to withdraw (including how schools should engage with parents)	34
How Government could support schools to teach the new subjects	34
Financial Education at post 16	36
Flexibility of schools	37
SEND	37
Regulations	38
Regulatory Impact Assessment	38

# Introduction

1. During the passage of the Children and Social Work Act in 2017, the government recognised that there was a compelling case to make Relationships Education for all primary pupils and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for all secondary pupils compulsory through regulations, and to consider the status of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) or elements of the subject for all state-funded pupils.
2. On 19 July 2018, the Department for Education launched a consultation on the draft regulations and statutory guidance and the regulatory impact assessment (RIA) relating to Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education<sup>1</sup>. This was the next stage of our engagement process, which included a call for evidence<sup>2</sup> to seek public views from adults and young people.
3. The department received 11,186 online and emailed responses to the consultation. Additionally, the department also received 29,000 signatures in response to two petitions. The online responses were analysed by Ipsos MORI using a text and statistical analysis approach. Responses sent in by letter or email and the signatures received via the petitions were reviewed internally by the department. Ipsos MORI's Executive Summary of the responses can be found at Annex A.
4. The responses and submissions have helped finalise the statutory guidance and regulatory impact assessment (RIA), as well as the regulations which will be laid and subject to parliamentary debates.
5. All schools will be required to teach these subjects and have regard to the statutory guidance from September 2020 (Health Education will be compulsory for all state-funded schools only, as independent schools are already required to teach Health Education under their requirement to teach Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education). We will, however, actively encourage and support schools to start teaching these new subjects from September 2019.
6. The subjects, by nature of their content, have attracted high levels of interest. The depth and breadth of views are clear, and there are understandable and legitimate areas of contention. We have reviewed the responses to the consultation on the basis of the principles we originally set out for these subjects. Our guiding principles have been that compulsory subjects should help keep children safe; help prepare children for the world in which they are growing up, including its laws

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<sup>1</sup> <https://consult.education.gov.uk/pshe/relationships-education-rse-health-education/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://consult.education.gov.uk/life-skills/pshe-rse-call-for-evidence/>

in relation to relationships, sex and health; and help foster respect for others and for difference. The content must be age and developmentally appropriate; provide schools with the flexibility to deliver the subjects in a way that will be most beneficial for their particular pupils; and be delivered in schools in a way that engages parents and recognises that they are the primary teachers of their children.

# **Guiding principles – the rationale for government’s approach to Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education**

7. Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly including online. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.
8. The government wants pupils to leave school prepared, in the widest sense, for adult life. The content of the regulations and guidance should reflect an effective balance between ensuring that children are taught the knowledge they require to thrive in a modern world, and ensuring that schools have flexibility to design and plan subject content within the wider curriculum in subjects such as Citizenship, Science, PE and Computing to meet the needs of their pupils.
9. For the new subjects of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education, the government has been clear that teaching must be age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate. Teaching should start with the central concept of always providing pupils with the knowledge they need on the laws of this country relating to the subject content.
10. The content must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect for the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents, while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need to prepare them to play a full part in society as responsible citizens. All of these subjects should be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach and broader school ethos, to support pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. For example, the curriculum on Relationships and Sex Education should complement, and be supported by, the school’s wider policies on behaviour, bullying and safeguarding. This is also the case for teaching about mental health within Health Education.
11. These subjects should support the wider work of schools in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop character and personal attributes that we believe are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils’ ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives.
12. With all of these subjects, schools should be aware that for many young people the distinction between the online world and other aspects of life is less marked than for many adults. Young people often operate very freely in the online world and by secondary school age, some are likely to be spending a substantial

proportion of their time online. Schools should take this into account in the preparation and delivery of the subjects.

13. The content of the subjects strikes a balance between prescribing clearly the important core knowledge that all pupils should be taught, whilst allowing flexibility for schools to design a curriculum that is relevant to their pupils. This also enables schools to consider how to teach the subjects, bearing in mind the religious backgrounds of their pupils, and enables schools with a religious character to build on the core content by reflecting the teachings of their faith. All schools must comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010<sup>3</sup>.
14. We are aware that there are some challenges in delivering these subjects to a high quality. To overcome some of these challenges, we will continue to work with schools, unions, other education providers (such as multi-academy trusts and dioceses) and expert organisations such as subject associations and charities.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>- part 6, chapter 1

## Consultation exercise

15. The public consultation ran from 19 July 2018 to 7 November 2018 and comprised of an online consultation, open to anyone of any age. The consultation was seeking responses on the draft:

- statutory guidance;
- regulations; and
- regulatory impact assessment.

### Profile of respondents

16. In total we received 11,157 online responses and 29 responses via email from a wide range of different respondents, including:

- Teachers – 8%
- Headteachers – 1%
- School governors – 2%
- Organisations/Teaching unions – 3%
- Parents – 31%
- Other education professionals – 7%
- Young people – 2%
- Grandparents – 11%
- Interested individuals – 29%

17. It is important to note that consultation samples are not representative of public opinion, and key groups are often over- or under-represented.

18. It should also be noted that the consultation asked respondents to self-identify as a respondent type (for example parent or young person) and it is possible that some respondents may have misrepresented themselves.

19. During the consultation we also became aware of a number of ‘campaign’ responses which were identical, or very similar, submitted through central coordination. This duplication does not invalidate the views expressed by these respondents, but it is useful to be aware of these responses, in order to contextualise the type and range of views articulated. These potential campaign responses were analysed no differently from other responses, but where these responses have had a large impact on the key themes at any question, this has been highlighted.

20. Additionally, there were over 29,000 signatories to two petitions, the first created by CitizensGo to raise concerns around the right to withdraw and the other by

Justice UK relating to parental rights to educate their children in line with their religious beliefs.

## Context of response

21. The analysis of the consultation included:

- Reviewing responses to all the closed questions in the consultation;
- Full thematic analysis of the key themes for each of the consultation questions based on the final online responses; and,
- Sentiment analysis, which looked at the differences in the emotional tone (negative and positive) of responses to each theme.

22. The consultation generated high levels of interest with a large variety of opinions expressed. Furthermore, some questions generated a higher response than others, for example, questions on Relationships Education and RSE had a higher response rate than questions on Health Education.

23. The nature of the questions means that people selecting ‘disagree/ strongly disagree’ could have polar opposite views on single issues. Respondents often also selected disagree not because they disagreed with the whole content, but because they disagreed with a single issue. We have therefore reviewed the regulations, guidance and RIA in light of these responses, recognising that we cannot make changes which address directly opposed views equally.

24. Looking at the responses overall, a large proportion disagreed with the position on teaching about LGBT in the guidance. There were many differing views, with some respondents wanting more content and others wanting no content. Some respondents felt primary children, or all children and young people are too young to be taught about LGBT, while others felt it was important for children to be aware of LGBT content and that this could be appropriately delivered in secondary or in both primary and secondary schools. The analysis of Question 24 (the open text question which allowed respondents to give further views on the guidance) reinforced how comments on LGBT and sexuality split opinions amongst respondents.

25. Clearly these two differing points of view cannot both be accommodated in this guidance. We have therefore considered these responses in light of the principles of the subjects, set out above. Pupils should be able to understand the world in which they are growing up, which means understanding that some people are LGBT, that this should be respected in British society, and that the law affords them and their relationships recognition and protections. Pupils growing up in families with LGBT members, or who are beginning to understand that they are or may be LGBT themselves, should feel that Relationships Education and RSE is relevant to them. Schools should make decisions about what is appropriate to teach on this subject and when based on the age and development of their pupils

and should involve their parent body in these decisions, informing them clearly and in a timely manner about what and how their pupils will be taught. The Government believes that this is the right approach to teaching about LGBT, and as such, this is set out in the guidance and will be made clear to schools through communications and further support they receive to deliver these subjects.

## **Working with expert organisations**

26. Between November 2017 and March 2018, the department held a wide-ranging stakeholder engagement process, which included hosting round-table sessions with national and local groups representing interested parties such as teachers and other education professionals, subject specialists, parents and religious bodies, as well as actively engaging with parliamentarians. Following the call for evidence, we continue to work with key expert organisations in the drafting of the guidance.
27. We further analysed responses submitted to the consultation from specific stakeholders in order for us to better understand the issues raised with the regulations and guidance and gain more insight into respondents' views. These were stakeholders who represented groups of interested parties in the subjects, such as those representing headteachers, teachers and governing bodies; and those who bring specific factual and evidence-based expertise.
28. Responses from expert organisations were broadly supportive of the draft guidance, for example:

**Ofsted** welcomed the changes in their response to the consultation; "We wish to endorse the proposal's overall aim to establish the compulsory nature of relationships education in primary schools and of sex education in secondary schools. We also strongly support the document's suggested approach."

**The Catholic Education Service** said, "The content of the Government's draft guidance is compatible with a Catholic approach to RSE."

**The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)** welcome the decision to make the subjects statutory; "We welcome the historic decision to make relationships education in primary schools, RSE in secondary schools, and health education in both phases statutory."

**Barnardo's** was also supportive of the content covered in the guidance; "The topics covered in Relationships Education are diverse and include subjects that Barnardo's believe should be taught, including healthy relationships, personal boundaries and online safety."

**The Centre of Social Justice** "warmly welcomes both draft guidance and regulations on Relationships and Sex Education."

**The Church of England**, welcomed the introduction of Health Education; "We welcome the fact that health education has been included in the statutory

guidance and are confident that this will help inform and enrich RSE programmes of study as well as helping support pupils at a time when there are growing concerns about the rise in the number of pupils reporting mental health problems.”

**Terrence Higgins Trust** deemed the content of Relationships Education to be age-appropriate for primary school pupils “we strongly believe that introducing children to the concept of relationships at a basic level, for example making references to family and friends, is of vital importance to understand what a healthy relationship looks like.” They support the Department’s focus on the concept of age appropriate curriculum.

29. In the following sections of this document we set out the context, summary of views received and the government’s response in respect of the subjects and the related documents, together with the next steps.

## Summary of responses

### Relationships Education at primary

#### General summary of responses

30. Many responses focused on the need for Relationships Education to place emphasis on family relationships and the importance of having strong and stable relationships with family. A large proportion of these responses referenced commitment and marriage, with some responses suggesting the guidance does not place enough emphasis on the value of marriage. A significant number suggested that teaching about family relationships is important in providing pupils with the necessary knowledge to have positive relationships. Those who disagreed with the closed question were particularly likely to mention the importance of parental involvement in supporting children to understand family relationships. Linked to these comments, a number of responses talked about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) relationships. There were differing views as to when pupils should be taught about LGBT relationships: those respondents who disagreed with the closed question were particularly likely to mention the topic of gender identity and sexuality and were largely in opposition to its teaching. Others, however, highlighted the importance of these topics to increase understanding, respect and equality.
31. Additionally, in the context of relationships, there were a number of responses on unhealthy relationships, with comments focusing on the need to safeguard children by teaching about types of abuse, violence, and bullying and that the inclusion of virtues such as self-control or self-sacrifice in the guidance could be

misinterpreted in these scenarios, as they often take on different meanings in these contexts.

32. Online activity was also mentioned by a number of respondents. Within the context of online activity, respondents talked about the importance of preparing children for the online world at an early stage, whilst others argued that children at this age are not active online and feel the content is not needed.
33. There were also a small number of responses referencing health and wellbeing. There was a call for content on puberty to be included, as it is felt that some young people are likely to have started puberty by the end of primary school.
34. Responses also focused on the role of parents in teaching their children about relationships and others mentioned the positive impacts of the new subjects.

## Response

35. The aim of Relationships Education is to put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds, starting with family and friends, and moving out to other kinds of relationships, including online. We are clear that parents are the primary teachers of their children and that this subject should complement what pupils are taught at home, with the active involvement of parents in the subject to ensure it is effective.
36. Having considered the spectrum of responses on this question and why respondents disagreed with the closed question, we believe we have broadly struck the right balance on the content of this subject. For example, teaching about family relationships and friendships are core elements of the proposed content, and marriage/ civil partnerships is specifically drawn out in the subject. We have added to the introduction to the primary Relationships Education content some clarification for teachers about the types of family in which their pupils may be growing up, to support teachers when preparing lessons.
37. In response to consultation responses, we have also clarified our intent on the development of character and personal attributes that will enable children to form relationships, but being clear that where unhealthy or abusive relationships form, it is never the fault of a child who is abused.
38. We believe there is sufficient evidence to suggest that many primary school pupils are using the internet and are therefore likely to encounter its risks as well as its benefits. We therefore think it is right to include age-appropriate content on online safety in this subject, allowing schools the flexibility to determine what content is appropriate at what points, based on the needs of their particular pupils.
39. Content on puberty is covered as part of Health Education and the national curriculum for science. Schools have the flexibility, however, to tailor their content about puberty to fit in with their content on Relationships Education.

## **Sex Education in Primary**

### **General summary of responses**

40. Only a small number of respondents specifically responded about the clarity of the guidance. Of these, opinions were split evenly on whether the guidance was clear or not.
41. Most comments on this question instead focused on the content primary schools should be required to teach within sex education, with respondents who disagreed with the closed question most likely to mention the topic of marriage and commitment, often specifically traditional marriage between a man and woman. Other respondents who disagreed were also particularly likely to mention gender and sexuality and the importance of covering these topics to promote respect. A number of respondents also commented on primary schools' decision to teach sex education - the main focus of these comments was on the involvement of parents in the decision, with some highlighting the importance of allowing parents to withdraw their child.

### **Response**

42. Primary schools are not required to teach sex education. The Department continues, however, to recommend that primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so. It is for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education, which isn't included in the national curriculum for science, to meet the needs of their pupils.
43. We have updated the paragraphs about the parental right to withdraw from any sex education primary schools choose to teach, as some respondents have found the paragraphs on sex education in primary unclear.
44. Primary schools that choose to teach sex education must allow parents a right to withdraw their child. Unlike sex education in RSE at secondary, all primary schools must comply with a parent's wish to withdraw their child from sex education beyond the content covered in the national curriculum for science. We have made clear that headteachers should discuss with parents their request, as they will do in secondary schools. For primary schools, headteachers will not be able to overrule a parent's decision.
45. Additionally, Annex A in the Statutory Guidance has been updated to reference the relevant provisions in the Education Act 1996, as some responses sought clearer references to the legislation regarding sex education at primary.

## **Relationships and Sex Education at secondary**

### **General summary of responses**

46. Respondents were split on the detail of the content in the draft guidance relating to RSE. Similar to the responses on Relationships Education in primary schools, the most frequently discussed topic was relationships and the importance of teaching children about healthy relationships. This included teaching on commitment and respect as well as stressing the importance of covering content on unhealthy relationships. Respondents who disagreed in the closed question were particularly likely to mention the topic of gender identity and sexuality and were largely in opposition to its teaching.
47. Many responses also focused on sexual health, particularly teaching about contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, the risks of sex, pregnancy, and the importance of factual knowledge. There were also some responses on religious views, with comments mainly referencing topics that should not be taught, including same-sex relationships, sex before marriage, and abortion.
48. Some respondents also commented on the need for more teaching on mental health in RSE, with some highlighting the impact of relationships on mental health. Some respondents suggested that there should be additional information on the negative effects of pornography and sexting.
49. Both here and in the general question on the draft guidance (question 24), issues around consent were also mentioned, with some respondents supporting teaching about consent and boundaries.

### **Response**

50. In RSE, the emphasis moves from the experience of the child in the context of their family to the young person as a potential partner and parent, and the characteristics of healthy, and unhealthy, intimate relationships. RSE will also cover the concepts of, and laws relating to, sex and relationships as well as the effects of relationships on their mental wellbeing. As set out in the guiding principles section above, we believe that schools should ensure RSE educates pupils about the world in which they are growing up and is inclusive to all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity, bearing in mind the age, development and religious backgrounds of their pupils.
51. Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. We are clear that this should be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment.
52. We have been clear that children should know the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, and

harassment. We have further strengthened the guidance on being safe to include content on female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and rape, given the safeguarding case for doing so.

53. We have also developed the wording on consent and boundaries. We have made clearer our reference to pornography as an example of content that can sometimes present a distorted image and be harmful when making healthy choices in relationships and sex.

## Health Education

### General summary of responses

54. Respondents generally accepted the content set out on Health Education in the guidance for primary and secondary schools and this was reflected by the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed on the related questions. The overall content on mental health and the link between physical and mental health, as well as first aid, was welcomed by many respondents.
55. However, some respondents wanted more content on mental health in primary school and greater awareness of different types of mental health, including depression, anxiety and stress.
56. Many responses referred to the specific content within Health Education. These predominantly focused on the content relating to physical health, mental health and puberty. On puberty, respondents suggested a need for more content on menstruation, especially in primary school, and on the emotional impacts of menstruation. Relationships, particularly family relationships, were also mentioned as playing an important role in pupils leading a healthy lifestyle.

### Response

57. We welcome the positive response to the Health Education content. We are also aware that many schools are already delivering a PSHE (or similarly described) programme and these schools are encouraged to carry on delivering high quality PSHE, which can be modified to meet the new requirements.

58. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Teachers should be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health. We also want children to be able to recognise and talk about their emotions, as well as understanding that it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who experience mental ill health, the problems can be addressed by having access to the right support as early as possible. In secondary school, health and wellbeing education should build on primary content and introduce new content to older pupils at appropriate points. This should enable pupils to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and

emotions and to understand why terms associated with mental and physical health difficulties should not be used pejoratively.

59. Further to the analysis of the consultation, we have made changes to the content on puberty to reflect that menstruation and menstrual wellbeing should be taught in all primary and secondary schools. We have also expanded teaching about internet safety and harms to include content on the potential risks of excessive screen time and the importance of keeping information private. We have also amended the content on organ and blood donation to include the science relating to stem cell donation after a number of responses explained the importance of young people understanding this topic.
60. Additionally, in light of some of the responses, we have updated the sections on mental health and inserted further detail under the safeguarding section for teachers on how pupils may raise topics, such as suicide and self-harm, and how they should handle these topics. It is important to note that, for safety reasons, this information is guidance for teachers rather than content that should be taught to pupils.

## **Age-appropriateness**

### **General summary of responses**

61. Opinions were divided on the age-appropriateness of the subjects, although views on Health Education were less split. Comments on age-appropriateness in Relationships Education and RSE predominately focused on the level and detail of the content, with more than half of the comments describing the content as relevant and comprehensive and others describing the content as covering too much or referencing topics they think should not be included. The majority of respondents focused on the topic of relationships. As with the other questions on Relationships and RSE, respondents who disagreed with the content were particularly likely to mention commitment and marriage, and gender identity and sexuality.

62. In relation to Health Education, respondents were less divided, with more than half of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the content for primary and secondary pupils is age-appropriate.

### **Response**

63. Respondents gave us feedback on whether we had met our aim of ensuring that the compulsory subject content is age-appropriate. In response, we have made clearer that teaching on menstruation is for primary and secondary age pupils, and also acknowledged that schools may need to consider how to ensure teaching is developmentally appropriate for some pupils. All the core content must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents, while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they

need of society and the law. Schools should work with parents, and the wider community so that the curriculum complements and reinforces parents' role as primary educators and matches the needs of their pupils and communities.

64. Pupils should be able to understand the world in which they are growing up, which means understanding that some people are LGBT, that individuals and their relationships should be respected, and that the law affords them and their relationships recognition and protections. Schools should make decisions about what is appropriate to teach on this subject based on the age and development of their pupils and should involve their parents in these decisions, informing them clearly and in a timely manner about what and how their pupils will be taught.

## **Parental engagement / Right to be excused from sex education (commonly known as right to withdraw)**

### **General summary of responses**

65. On the questions relating to guidance and regulations on whether the right to be excused from sex education provided sufficient clarity and parental engagement, respondents who expressed disagreement in the closed question were particularly likely to reference headteachers' and parents' role in the withdrawal process. There were strong, mixed views on this topic, with some respondents feeling strongly that a headteacher's power would undermine parents' rights as the primary teachers of their children, particularly where relationships and sex are concerned. Meanwhile others wanted more flexibility for the headteacher to approve or deny requests.
66. Respondents also focused on the negative outcomes of pupils being withdrawn from sex education, with safeguarding being listed as one of the main concerns for pupils being withdrawn from RSE, particularly for more vulnerable groups. On the other hand, some respondents expressed concern about changes to the right to withdraw and its potential implications, such as parents withdrawing their children from school altogether and opting for home-schooling, or schools indoctrinating children about certain relationship types.
67. The right to withdraw was also a particularly concerning issue for those people who signed petitions. One petition requested an absolute parental right to withdraw their children from RSE and its extension to Relationships Education.
68. Respondents also commented on the clarity of the guidance, with many of these suggesting it was unclear, too vague and that the phrase exceptional circumstances was too open to interpretation.

### **Response**

69. We understand the legitimate areas of contention on this topic and it is difficult to make changes in response to views that are in direct opposition to each other. We have set out the right to withdraw this way because the current legislation contains

a right to withdraw which is no longer compatible with English caselaw and the European Convention on Human Rights. In addition, given that young people are able to consent and engage in sexual activity at age 16, they should be able to access sex education before that point.

70. We recognise, however, that parents are the primary teachers of their children. That is why parents will be able to request that their child be withdrawn from the sex education element of RSE. The school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, except in exceptional circumstances, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.
71. Schools should continue to work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when, and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. When such a request is received, headteachers should discuss this with the parents before making their decision.
72. We have updated the guidance to clarify that headteachers should document their decision-making process on the right to withdraw.
73. We believe the draft regulation preserves the parental right in most cases, but also balances it with the child's rights, particularly once they are competent to make their own decisions. During the passage of the Children and Social Work Act in 2017, Parliament made the decision not to extend the right to withdraw to Relationships Education.

## Flexibility

### General summary of responses

74. More respondents than not agreed with providing schools with flexibility in delivering the subjects. In the responses relating to flexibility, some focused on the Equality Act. Within these responses, there was a belief that the Equality Act had been misused to introduce teaching of certain topics, and that religion and LGBT relationship teaching should actually be precluded under the provisions of the Act.
75. Other comments suggested flexibility should be given to local communities to comment on the approach and this should explicitly mention parents as well. Additionally, there were some comments on the relevance of the approach. A number of these comments urged the need to show flexibility as to the age appropriateness of lessons and the teaching materials.
76. Other responses felt the guidance was too ambiguous in articulating how the subjects are delivered and others felt it was important to ensure a more uniform approach to curriculum delivery, so that it is not so flexible that pupils in the same school and age range are taught different things.

77. As mentioned in the analysis to the other questions, many responses focused on religion and LGBT with some wanting a stronger reference to LGBT content and others wanting no LGBT content in the subjects.

## Response

78. As with other aspects of the curriculum, schools will have flexibility over how they deliver these subjects, so they can develop an integrated approach that is sensitive to the needs of their pupils and the community and allows schools to respond to local public health and community issues.

79. The guidance is clear that pupils should be able to understand the world in which they are growing up, which means understanding that some people are LGBT, that this should be respected in British society, and that the law affords them and their relationships recognition and protections. Schools should make decisions about what it is appropriate to teach on this subject and when, based on the age, development and religious backgrounds of their pupils, and should involve their parents in these decisions, informing them clearly and in a timely manner about what and how their pupils will be taught.

80. Although schools will have the flexibility on how they deliver content on these subjects, the content outlined in the guidance should be taught to all pupils in line with the guiding principles set out above.

81. We have amended the wording in paragraphs 18-21 to reflect that the guidance on pupils with a religious background applies to all schools, and not just schools of a religious character.

## SEND

### General summary of responses

82. On the questions about SEND, more respondents than not agreed that the guidance provided sufficient detail about how the subjects can be made accessible for SEND pupils. Some of the responses focused on the importance of RSE to SEND pupils. Within these, responses highlighted concerns in recognising the challenges and safeguarding issues. Responses also commented on the process for adopting and designing the guidance, with the majority referencing the need to consult parents. However, some respondents said that in special schools and for some SEND pupils in mainstream schools there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of children at different developmental stages.

83. On the question relating to the right to withdraw, many commented that there needed to be close liaison with parents. Additionally, others felt there needed to be more clarity and asked for examples of the exceptional circumstances where headteachers might need to take a pupil's SEND into account.

## **Response**

84. We are pleased that many respondents welcomed the guidance on SEND and that these subjects must be accessible for all pupils. In response to comments received, we have clarified in the guidance that the process for the right to withdraw is the same for pupils with SEND, but there may be some very rare circumstances where specific elements of a pupil's SEND should be considered by the headteacher when making a decision on a parental request for withdrawal.

## **School Support and implementation**

### **General summary of responses**

85. A large proportion of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with questions about whether the resources and support currently available to primary and secondary schools will be sufficient to enable them to teach the new subjects, suggesting lower levels of knowledge around this topic. Although most respondents neither agreed or disagreed, more respondents disagreed than agreed. Respondents most frequently mentioned the need for training, and the resource implications that the new subjects will have on schools. Some respondents were also concerned about the objectivity of resources that are used and said that they would welcome additional guidance about which resources are appropriate. There were also issues raised about the delivery of the subjects, with respondents highlighting the importance of lessons being delivered in a safe environment and by well-trained staff.

86. Respondents who disagreed that the current level of resources and support are sufficient were asked to rank a range of different types of support the department could provide to enable schools to teach the new subjects. In primary, provision of, or signposting to, teacher guides or training in the new subject knowledge was ranked as the most useful source of support by respondents. In secondary, provision of, or sign posting to, curriculum planning resources was ranked as the most useful source of support by respondents.

## **Response**

87. In response to the questions on school support, we can confirm that the department is committed to supporting schools to enable them to deliver high quality Relationships Education at primary, RSE at secondary, and Health Education in all state-funded schools. We will work with schools, unions, other education providers (such as multi-academy trusts and dioceses) and expert organisations such as subject associations to encourage early adopter schools, who will begin teaching to the new requirements from September 2019. The lessons we learn from these early adopter schools will be shared with schools working to a slower timetable to enable them to design quality curriculum programmes and prepare their teachers. We will also provide further advice to

support schools to improve their practices and offer training that could be delivered using the latest technology, including opportunities for face to face training for teachers who might need it.

88. The consultation, alongside almost daily reports in the media and direct from schools and young people themselves, show us that the internet, whilst being a force for good, presents children and young people with considerable challenges. We know that schools need to consider this holistically in order to ensure their pupils are well-equipped to make good decisions online and keep themselves and their personal information safe. We therefore intend to produce supporting information for schools on how to teach about all aspects of internet safety, not just those relating to relationships, sex and health, to help schools deliver this in a coordinated and coherent way across their curriculum.

## Financial Education

### General summary of responses

89. Most respondents agreed/strongly agreed that more is required on financial education for post-16 pupils. Money management was the most frequently mentioned topic, including debt, pensions and future planning. Responses also focused on financial safety, highlighting risk taking behaviours such as gambling. Respondents also mentioned the importance of teaching pupils about the cost of living, including budgeting, National Insurance, tax, employment, bills, and rent. Some comments also focused on the need for more financial education for younger pupils in the Maths and Citizenship curricula and as part of a wider PSHE programme.

### Response

90. Economic and financial education are important parts of a broad and balanced curriculum, and schools, colleges and universities play a role in providing children with the knowledge and understanding to prepare them to play a full part in society.

91. Financial literacy was made statutory within the national curriculum through Citizenship for 11-16 year olds and together with the rigorous new Maths curriculum this gives pupils the skills they need to make important decisions later in life. Schools can draw on the expertise of external organisations when teaching about financial issues. For example, Young Money and Martin Lewis recently launched a free financial education textbook for secondary schools, to support high quality teaching across the area and we have welcomed the opportunity to support this work.

92. We will continue to work with HMT, the new Single Financial Guidance Body and other key stakeholders to raise the status and quality of financial education in schools and colleges. We will continue to consider how we can better coordinate

work and support for those in post 16 institutions and ensure that all young people receive the financial education they need.

## Regulations

### General summary of responses

93. Responses on whether the draft regulations clearly set out the requirements for schools to teach the new subjects were evenly split between: agree, disagree, and neutral. However, on the advice to schools on how headteachers should decide on the teaching of the new subjects, over half of respondents disagreed that it is appropriate and workable. There was a strong response in the comments on the regulations regarding the teaching of marriage, with some respondents requesting teaching on different types of relationships like civil partnerships and co-habitation. There were also a number of concerns raised that the language used is imprecise, making the regulations open to interpretation, and about the lack of exact content to be taught at particular age groups, and the level of parental engagement. Concerns were also raised about the technical language used in the regulations.

### Response

94. The draft regulations do not specify detailed content of what schools should teach in relation to the new subjects. The areas that schools should cover are set out in the guidance which schools must have regard to. It is not appropriate to specify the exact content of the subjects in the regulations, as this would be too prescriptive and would limit schools in what they are able to choose to teach, as well as risking the legislation becoming quickly out of date.
95. To reflect some of the responses on the draft regulations, we have since updated the draft regulations to include civil partnerships alongside marriage, as both are legally recognised partnerships.
96. The department intends to lay the regulations in parliament which will be subject to debate in both houses in Spring 2019. If the regulations pass through both houses, the regulations will be made and the final guidance will be published. Schools will be required to comply with the regulations and have regard to the guidance from September 2020.

## Regulatory Impact Assessment

97. The Regulatory Impact Assessment sets out the assessment the department has made of the impact of the requirement to teach mandatory Relationships Education (primary) and RSE (secondary) on schools, and specifically on independent schools. This assessment has been made in line with requirements set out in the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015. The annual net cost to independent schools as set out in the draft assessment was estimated at £3.92m.

## **General summary of responses**

98. On the questions relating to the draft regulatory impact assessment, a majority of respondents neither agreed or disagreed with the assumptions and estimated costs detailed in the assessment. A small number either disagreed/strongly disagreed or either agreed/strongly agreed. Of those who responded to the regulatory impact assessment questions, the majority of respondents suggested a number of reasons why they disagreed with the assessment but did not provide detailed evidence to help further inform the assumptions.
99. The most common themes mentioned for disagreement included the training of staff and an under estimation of the amount of training that was needed. Other strong themes included time, which focused on the time teachers would need to train to teach the subjects, and resource, with respondents highlighting the costs of having to source, purchase and prepare resources internally. Some respondents also used the open questions to state their general opposition to the proposals and reiterated points made elsewhere in their response.
100. Additionally, when asked if there were any other cost burdens on schools, 67% of respondents were not sure. Where respondents did provide examples of further cost burdens, they mentioned the need for additional resources as the biggest internal burden, and costs and training teachers as the biggest external burdens on schools.

## **Response**

101. Based on the evidence received, we have revisited our initial set of estimates and increased the duration of training for teachers to 1.5 days (10 hours) each. As a result of this change, the net cost to businesses and charities per year has increased by £0.68m, which has been reflected in the updated regulatory impact assessment.

## Next steps

102. The government would like to thank all of the respondents who took the time to give their views and advice on the issues raised in this consultation.
103. We have laid the regulations in parliament and they will be subject to debate in both houses shortly. If the regulations pass through both houses, the regulations will be made and the final guidance and regulations will be published.
104. Following making of the regulations, all schools in England will be required to have regard to the statutory guidance on Relationships Education and RSE, and all state funded schools in England will be required to have regard to the statutory guidance on Health Education. We intend the new requirements to come into force from September 2020. The guidance will be reviewed after 3 years and regularly thereafter.
105. We will continue to work with subject experts to ensure schools are supported to improve their practice, focusing on a supplementary guide, targeted support on materials, and training; and to encourage as many schools to start teaching the subjects from September 2019. We will use this process to learn lessons and share good practice about how these subjects are being taught and how schools are transitioning from teaching the old Sex and Relationship Education to the new subjects.

# Summary of Responses to Closed Questions

Table 1: Breakdown of response to closed questions

Breakdown of response to closed questions				
<b>Q10. Do you agree that the content of Relationships Education in paragraphs 50-57 of the guidance is age-appropriate for primary schools?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13%	18%	12%	18%	40%
<b>Q11. Do you agree that the content of Relationships Education as set out in paragraphs 50-57 of the guidance will provide primary school pupils with sufficient knowledge to help them have positive relationships?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9%	16%	15%	18%	42%
<b>Q12. Do you agree that paragraphs 61-64 clearly set out the requirements on primary schools who choose to teach sex education?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12%	24%	14%	14%	35%
<b>Q13. Do you agree that the content of RSE in paragraphs 65-77 of the guidance is age-appropriate for secondary schools?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10%	14%	12%	14%	50%
<b>Q14. Do you agree that the content of RSE as set out in paragraphs 65-77 of the guidance will provide secondary school pupils with sufficient knowledge to help them have positive relationships?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8%	12%	15%	16%	50%

<b>Breakdown of response to closed questions</b>				
<b>Q15. Do you agree that paragraphs 36-46 on the right to withdraw provide sufficient clarity and advice to schools in order for them to meet the legal requirements?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13%	21%	12%	17%	37%
<b>Q16. Do you agree that the content of physical health and wellbeing education in paragraphs 86-92 of the guidance is age-appropriate for primary school pupils?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
23%	39%	15%	9%	14%
<b>Q17. Do you agree that the content of physical health and wellbeing education as set out in paragraphs 86-92 of the guidance will provide primary school pupils with sufficient knowledge to help them lead a healthy lifestyle?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17%	40%	18%	10%	15%
<b>Q18. Do you agree that the content of physical health and wellbeing education in paragraphs 93-99 of the guidance is age appropriate for secondary school pupils?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18%	39%	20%	8%	15%
<b>Q19. Do you agree that the content of physical health and wellbeing education in paragraphs 93-99 of the guidance will provide secondary school pupils with sufficient knowledge to help them lead a healthy lifestyle?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Breakdown of response to closed questions					
	15%	39%	20%	10%	16%
<b>Q20. Do you agree with the approach outlined in paragraphs 36-46 on how schools should engage with parents on the subjects?</b>					
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
16%	27%	13%	24%	20%	
<b>Q21. Paragraphs 108-109 in the guidance describe the flexibility that schools would have to determine how they teach the content of Relationships Education/RSE/Health Education. Do you agree with the outlined approach?</b>					
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
15%	32%	21%	13%	20%	
<b>Q22. Do you agree that paragraph 44 of the guidance provides clear advice on how headteachers in the exceptional circumstances will want to take the child's SEND into account when making this decision?</b>					
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
11%	28%	30%	14%	18%	
<b>Q23. Do you agree that paragraphs 30-32 of the guidance provide sufficient detail about how schools can adapt the teaching and design of the subjects to make them accessible for those with SEND?</b>					
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
15%	36%	29%	9%	12%	
<b>Q25. Do you agree that more is required on financial education for post-16 pupils?</b>					
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
44%	33%	16%	2%	5%	

Breakdown of response to closed questions				
<b>Q26. Do you agree that the resources and support currently available to primary schools will be sufficient to enable them to teach the new subjects?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6%	11%	41%	22%	20%
<b>Q27. Do you agree that the resources and support currently available to secondary schools will be sufficient to enable them to teach the new subjects?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6%	12%	45%	18%	20%
<b>Q28. Do you agree that the draft regulations clearly set out the requirements on schools to teach the new subjects of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8%	29%	27%	14%	22%
<b>Q29. Taking into account the advice to schools on how headteachers should take this decision, in paragraphs 41-46 of the guidance, do you agree that this is an appropriate and workable option?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9%	20%	12%	17%	41%
<b>Q31. Tables (6-8) in section F of the draft assessment set out the assumptions we have made in estimating the cost burden for schools to implement the new requirements. Do you agree with our assumptions and the estimated additional costs to schools?</b>				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3%	18%	54%	10%	16%

<b>Breakdown of response to closed questions</b>				
<b>Q32. Are there any other cost burdens on schools which you believe should be included in the regulatory impact assessment?</b>				
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not sure</b>		
21%	11%	67%		

# Annex A: Ipsos MORI Executive Summary

## Executive summary

### Background to the consultation

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 placed a duty on the Secretary of State for Education to make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education and, subject to the outcome of an engagement process, PSHE (or elements of it) compulsory in schools. Following a previous call for evidence and the decision to make Health Education compulsory in all state funded schools, the regulations, statutory guidance and regulatory impact assessment were drafted for the new subjects. The consultation was open between 19 July 2018 and 7 November 2018. It consisted of 24 questions and 21 closed questions across these themes, in addition to demographic and contextual questions. The consultation received 11,157 online responses from individuals and organisations.

A breakdown of respondents by role and religion can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1: Breakdown of respondents' role and religion**

		Number of respondents	Percentage of total
Respondent type			
	Parent	3,411	30.60%
	Interested individual	3,189	28.61%
	Grandparent	1,170	10.50%
	Teacher	890	7.98%
	Other educational professional	802	7.19%
	Other	619	5.55%
	Organisation	328	2.94%
	Young person	231	2.07%
	School Governor	185	1.66%
	Headteacher	143	1.28%
	No response	332	2.98%

		<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total</b>
<b>Respondent religion</b>	Christian	2,984	26.77%
	No religion	1,104	9.90%
	Muslim	1,001	8.98%
	Prefer not to say	461	4.14%
	Jewish	400	3.59%
	Other religion	127	1.14%
	Buddhist	21	0.19%
	Hindu	7	0.06%
	Sikh	7	0.06%
	No response	5,035	45.17%

A breakdown of the young people who participated by school stage can be found in Table 2.

**Table 2: Young people's school stage**

		<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total</b>
<b>Young person school stage</b>	Primary	66	28.6%
	Secondary	29	12.6%
	6 <sup>th</sup> form	33	14.3%
	Completed secondary education	15	6.5%
	Alternative provision	3	1.3%
	Not yet school age	2	0.9%
	No response	83	35.9%

Base: All those who reported being young people (231).

A breakdown of teachers, headteachers and governors who participated by school stage can be found in Table 3.

**Table 3: Teacher/headteacher/school governors' school stage**

		Number of respondents	Percentage of total
<b>Teacher / headteacher/ governor school stage</b>	Primary	476	39.1%
	Secondary	336	27.6%
	6th form	67	5.5%
	Alternative provision	45	3.7%
	Not yet school age	27	2.2%
	No response	412	33.8%

Base: All those who reported being teachers, headteachers or school governors (1,218).

## Relationships Education in Primary Schools

Nearly three in five (58%) disagreed that the content of Relationships Education (in paragraphs 50-57) is age appropriate for primary schools. A similar proportion (60%) of respondents also disagreed that the guidance will provide primary school pupils with sufficient knowledge to help them have positive relationships.

Among those who made a free-text response, the greatest number commented on the level of coverage of topics (1,197 responses), with more than half commenting that the content of Relationships Education proposed in this section of the guidance is good (694), with most of these responses specifically saying that the content is age-appropriate (508). Other comments questioned the age-appropriateness of the content (444) whilst the content's language can also be interpreted as vague and open to interpretation (132).

In terms of relationships, there was an appreciation and understanding of the importance of learning about family relationships (951), with some believing it is important to teach them about unhealthy relationships as well (266). A large proportion of responses about relationships referenced teaching about commitment and marriage (727) with some responses criticising the guidance for not placing enough emphasis on the value of marriage, often specifically heterosexual marriage.

## Sex Education in Primary

Half of those responding to the question (50%) disagreed that paragraphs 61-64 clearly set out the requirements on primary schools who choose to teach sex education. Responses most frequently mentioned specific content within sex education (2,125), specifically that which should and should not be taught. The most commonly mentioned topic was relationships (1,310). Comments highlighted the importance of teaching about marriage and commitment (807), often specifically traditional marriage between a man and a woman. Respondents who disagreed that the guidance for primary schools who

choose to teach sex education is clear were particularly likely to mention the topic of marriage and commitment.

Other comments mentioned the need to teach about unhealthy relationships (218), sex/sexual relationships (564), and issues such as contraception, pregnancy etc.

A number of responses talked about the decision to teach sex education (1,639). The main topic mentioned by these respondents was the involvement of parents in decision-making (1,416). Some responses highlighted the importance of allowing parents the right to withdraw their child from sex education (140), which was often linked to religious views (370) about which topics should be taught at school. Responses also referenced the need to consult and communicate with parents (54) about the teaching of sex education.

## **Relationships and Sex Education in Secondary Schools**

As for secondary schools, nearly two-thirds of those responding (64%) disagreed that the guidance is age-appropriate for secondary schools. A quarter (24%) agreed.

Like responses about primary Relationships Education content, responses about the secondary school content most frequently discussed specific topics within RSE: relationships (1,902), sex (913), health and wellbeing (295) and online activity (241). Many respondents also talked about the coverage of topics (867). Moral or religious views (598) were mentioned by a number of respondents, and some responses also mentioned aspects of the delivery of Relationships Education (362).

Two-thirds of those responding (66%) disagreed that the guidance will provide secondary school pupils with sufficient knowledge to help them have positive relationships. Only one in five (20%) agreed.

The themes most frequently mentioned by respondents related to relationships (1,913), sex (1,333), health (501), and online activity (405). A substantial number of respondents also mentioned topics related to guidance detail (317), delivery of RSE (394), and religion (190). Each of these themes are considered in turn below.

The importance of educating secondary school pupils about healthy relationships (620) was seen as the most important element of relationship education. This includes teaching pupils about commitment (773), respect (315) and intimate relationships (131), as well as drawing attention to what an unhealthy relationship looks like.

Within the topics relating to sex, gender identity and sexuality (879) was the most frequently mentioned subject area. Sexual relationships (657), including LGBT sexual relationships, were also mentioned by many of the respondents, whilst the importance of teaching about sexual health (e.g. contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, risks, pregnancy etc.) were also emphasised.

## LGBT

LGBT is a specific issue which was raised in response to several questions in the consultation. It was a commonly mentioned theme at Q21, in response to the flexibility that schools would have to determine how they teach the content of Relationships Education/RSE/Health Education.

A sizeable proportion of comments were specifically about the teaching of LGBT (373), with views polarised between those who were against the teaching of LGBT (185) and those who thought LGBT should be compulsory education for all (77).

Those against LGBT teaching did not think that schools should be forced to teach about these types of relationship, while other responses were just opposed to teaching about this topic.

Those in support of LGBT teaching thought that everyone should be taught about LGBT relationships regardless of faith and that it would be discriminatory to not teach about them, and that there should be adequate monitoring of such teaching to ensure it is being carried out correctly.

## Health Education

Questions about health education generally received comparatively fewer responses than others. The majority supported the need for physical health to be taught to primary school pupils (397) whilst others emphasised the importance of mental health (338) and the need to raise awareness of depression, anxiety and stress from a young age. Nearly three-in-five respondents (57%) agreed that the content of physical health and wellbeing education as set out in paragraphs 86-92 of the guidance will provide primary school pupils with sufficient knowledge to help them lead a healthy lifestyle. In terms of whether the content of physical health and wellbeing education in paragraphs 86-92 is age-appropriate for primary school pupils, three in five (61%) of those responding agreed that it is whilst only a quarter (24%) disagreed.

Turning to the age-appropriateness of teaching health education in secondary schools, puberty (233) was a key topic - the majority of comments referenced the need to teach about menstruation. The pressing issue of mental health (233) and emotional wellbeing was also seen as an important area in which to raise awareness and build resilience.

There were also other specific issues relating to age appropriateness, including the need to teach about online activity (143) and also about gender-based issues (218).

A majority of respondents (54%) agreed that the content will provide secondary school pupils with sufficient knowledge to help them lead a healthy lifestyle. Many respondents mentioned the importance of teaching about physical health (297) with secondary school pupils. Once again, the need to teach mental health was emphasised, as it links so closely to physical wellbeing.

## **Right to withdraw (including how schools should engage with parents)**

The right to withdraw is an issue which generated responses across more than one question in the consultation. Over half (54%) of respondents disagreed that paragraphs 36-46 on the right to withdraw provide sufficient clarity and advice to schools in order for them to meet the legal requirements – around a third (34%) agreed.

The majority of responses to this question commented on the withdrawal decision (1,480), specifically to the involvement of the headteacher. Opinions were polarised, with some respondents commenting that this power undermines parents' right to withdraw, whilst others advocated for headteachers to have the flexibility to grant or deny requests. In the question on the right to withdraw relating to the regulations, around three in five (58%) disagreed with the option to withdraw their child (unless the headteacher considers they should not be is a workable option). The main reason for this is a lack of communication between parents and headteachers (1,463), particularly the lack of parental say.

Many comments mentioned the outcomes of withdrawing pupils (574), and many mentioned the clarity of the guidance (414) as a positive. In terms of the outcomes, there was concern that withdrawal of pupils could pose a safeguarding issue (412) as some felt it is important for pupils to be taught how to recognise abuse.

In terms of how schools should engage with parents, views were split evenly between agreement and disagreement with the approach outlined in paragraphs 36-46 (43% agree, 44% disagree). A large proportion of responses (1,651) included opinions about the outlined approach to the right to withdraw from sex education. Other responses mentioned specific ways in which parents could be engaged in the new subjects; for example, the importance of parents being able to see the teaching materials (344) that are being used and the importance of being able to meet the teacher (51) to discuss what will be covered in the lessons.

## **How Government could support schools to teach the new subjects**

In terms of the support available to primary schools, only 16% of respondents agreed that the resources and support currently available will be sufficient to enable them to teach the new subjects (43% disagreed). A similar proportion agreed that the resources are sufficient for secondary schools (17% agreed, 38% disagreed).

Those who did not think the resources are suitable mention the need for training (379 primary, 323 secondary) to support the delivery of the new subjects. Respondents also mentioned a number of other resource implications (279 primary, 220 secondary) that teaching the new subjects will have for schools, and which they did not feel had been sufficiently accounted for. Respondents were also concerned about the objectivity of resources (298) that are used by primary schools.

Those who disagreed that primary school resources and support are sufficient were asked to rank a range of different types of support the department could provide to enable primary schools to teach the new subjects. Of the 2,068 respondents who were eligible to answer the question (having disagreed or strongly disagreed at the previous question), 1,368 answered the question while 700 respondents left the question blank. Table 36 shows the proportion who ranked each type of support as ‘most useful’.

**Table 1: Options ranked as most useful**

Type of support	Proportion ranked ‘most useful’	Percentage ranked ‘most useful’
<b>Provision of, or signposting to, teacher guides or training in the new subject knowledge</b>	330	24%
<b>Guidance or training in how to select appropriate teaching resources for Relationships Education and Health Education</b>	284	21%
<b>Guidance on how to select appropriate training</b>	271	20%
<b>Provision of, or sign posting to, curriculum planning resources</b>	322	24%
<b>Provision of, or signposting to, teacher guides or training in pedagogy for the new subject</b>	161	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,368</b>	<b>100%</b>

Those who disagreed that secondary school resources and support are sufficient were asked to rank a range of different types of support the department could provide to enable primary schools to teach the new subjects. Of the 1,692 respondents who were eligible to answer the question (having disagreed or strongly disagreed at the previous question), 1,134 answered the question while 64 respondents left the question blank. Table 19 shows the proportion who ranked each type of support as ‘most useful’.

**Table 2: Options ranked as most useful**

Type of support	Proportion ranked 'most useful'	Percentage ranked 'most useful'
<b>Provision of, or sign posting to, curriculum planning resources</b>	274	26%
<b>Guidance on how to select appropriate training</b>	238	22%
<b>Provision of, or signposting to, teacher guides or training in the new subject knowledge</b>	242	23%
<b>Guidance or training in how to select appropriate teaching resources for Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education</b>	188	18%
<b>Provision of, or signposting to, teacher guides or training in pedagogy for the new subject</b>	128	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Financial Education at post 16

Three-quarters (76%) of respondents agreed that more is required on financial education for post-16 pupils.

The majority of respondents mentioned topics they felt financial education should cover (929). Money management (489) was the most frequently mentioned subject area that respondents felt should be taught in financial education. Respondents felt that pupils should be taught about debt (423), including what it is, and how it can be avoided.

Other areas of focus included financial safety (351), which included risk taking and gambling. However, others simply felt pupils should be taught about the cost of living, which many don't know about when leaving school.

## **Flexibility of schools**

Just less than half the respondents (46%) agreed or strongly agreed with the outlined approach describing the flexibility that schools would have to determine how they teach. Around one in three (32%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The majority of comments made direct reference to the flexibility paragraphs included in the guidance (1070). The next most common theme was that of religion, and how flexibility should be offered to pupils/families of differing religions (450).

When commenting on flexibility, there was a belief that the Equality Act has been misused to introduce certain teaching, and that religion and LGBT relationship teaching should actually be precluded under the auspices of the Act (247). Others commented that the flexibility should be given to local communities to comment on the approach (142) and that this should explicitly mention parents as well (who are part of the local community).

Other comments reiterated the issue concerning right to withdraw (184), while a similar numbers of comments referred to educational content (182). There were a handful of other comments made about the guidance wording (130), the vagueness of the wording (40) and the perceived limitations of the outlined approach. Finally, there were other comments about a lack of guidance as to how parents should be consulted (187).

## **SEND**

Two in five (39%) agreed that paragraph 44 of the guidance provides clear advice on how headteachers, in the exceptional circumstances, will want to take the child's SEND into account when making decisions.

In terms of the right to withdraw, two in five (39%) agreed that the guidance provides clear advice on how headteachers in the exceptional circumstances will want to take the child's SEND into account when making this decision. Three in ten (31%) disagreed. A large number of respondents (783) discussed who should be responsible for making decisions regarding pupils with SEND. Concerns were also raised in relation to the clarity of the guidance (242) and safeguarding (130), the latter as an expression of the concern that pupils with SEND may be at a higher risk of abuse. Smaller numbers of respondents discussed the need for headteachers to take a tailored approach (81) and the types of support that will be required by headteachers (69).

Of those respondents who discussed the way in which decisions relating to pupils with SEND are made (783), the vast majority (769) mentioned the need for close liaison with parents.

In terms of the detail concerning how schools can adapt the teaching and design of the subjects to make them accessible for those with SEND (paragraphs 30-32), half (50%) agreed that sufficient detail is provided. One particular issue of concern was the need to

recognise the challenges which come with teaching RSE to those pupils with special educational needs (445). These pupils are likely to be more vulnerable to forms of bullying/harassment, sexual abuse/exploitation and also are likely to have additional challenges when it comes to building and maintaining relationships in life, all of which could require parental involvement given parents are most likely to understand their child best.

A number of responses also commented on the process for adapting and designing the guidance (284). The majority of these responses referenced the need to consult with parents (143), mainly because they are the people who know pupils best and can therefore offer specific advice unique to their child's behaviour.

## Regulations

Opinions were evenly split as to whether the draft regulations clearly set out the requirements to schools to teach the new subjects of relationships education, RSE and health education (37% agree, 37% disagree).

One of the main issues raised was the clarity of the guidance, with imprecise language leading to potential misinterpretation (119) and the lack of comprehensiveness and the technical style of the language used (103). Other, less commonly mentioned concerns about the draft regulations related to the impact they might have on the rights of parents, specifically those which could be perceived as being their responsibility (e.g. teaching about relationships).

## Regulatory Impact Assessment

Over half of respondents (54%) neither agreed nor disagreed when asked about the assumptions and the estimated additional costs to schools (tables 6-8 in Section F of the draft assessment), which suggests they did not have adequate knowledge to assess whether the assumptions were reasonable.

For those who could provide an informed response, respondents most frequently mentioned staff (183), specifically the time which would be required to adequately train them to teach the new subjects.

In terms of other cost burdens, one in five (21%) identified other things which could be included in the regulatory impact assessment. Any mention of costs broadly fell into two categories, internal burdens (459) and external burdens (246).

Internal burdens include the prohibitive cost of resources, particularly in a context where school budgets are already stretched. The burden on staff time was also a significant issue and there was concern as to the impact of this increased burden on the other, core curriculum areas.

In terms of external burdens, the costs of purchasing new equipment and training by specialist (external) providers were most commonly mentioned.

Respondents were given the opportunity to make any further comments about the regulatory impact assessment. Around half (178) of responses reiterated general opposition to the introduction of general health teaching as part of the curriculum, with the majority of these responses replicating opinions which had been made in responses to previous questions.

Other responses referenced concerns over general costs (140), teaching about homosexuality (124), and the legal rights of parents to withdraw their children from lessons (150). A further 78 responses referenced general rights of parents to decide what is best for their children, while others mention the conflict with religion (36), the general burden on teachers, and the need to standardise health teaching across state and private schools (26).



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