

Frequently Asked Questions – PSHE and RSHE

What is PSHE and RSHE?

PSHE stands for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education. It helps children develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to stay safe and healthy, build positive relationships, manage their feelings and prepare for life beyond school.
RSHE refers to Relationships, Sex and Health Education. At primary school, Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory and are taught as part of our wider PSHE curriculum.

Why is the school reviewing its PSHE and RSHE curriculum?

The Department for Education published updated statutory RSHE guidance in 2025, which schools must implement from September 2026.
We already use Jigsaw PSHE, which has updated its primary programme to meet the new requirements. We are therefore reviewing our policy and curriculum so that everything is fully up to date for September 2026.

Is Christ Church introducing a completely new PSHE curriculum?

No. We will continue to use Jigsaw PSHE, and the overall structure remains the same. Children will continue to learn through the six Jigsaw themes:

BM	Being Me in My World	CD	Celebrating Difference
DG	Dreams and Goals	HM	Healthy Me
RL	Relationships	CM	Changing Me

Jigsaw has updated and strengthened some lessons rather than replacing the whole programme. Changes include greater emphasis on personal safety, online safety and digital literacy, emotional wellbeing, healthy relationships, boundaries and knowing how and when to ask for help. The 2026 updates also strengthen personal hygiene, dental health, health protection, medicines and substance education (including vaping and nicotine), as well as online topics such as age restrictions, gaming and digital spending.

How is PSHE taught at Christ Church?

Children are taught PSHE every week. The six Jigsaw Puzzles are taught in the same order across the school, with learning revisited at increasing depth as children grow.

Is all RSHE compulsory?

No — there is an important distinction.
Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory for primary-aged children.
Parents cannot withdraw their child from these parts of the curriculum.
This includes learning about areas such as:

- families and friendships;
- respectful relationships;
- online safety;
- keeping safe;
- physical and mental health;
- puberty and developing bodies;
- hygiene;
- first aid and personal safety.

Sex Education beyond the statutory curriculum is not compulsory in primary schools, and parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from this specific content.
Relevant National Curriculum science content is also statutory, and parents cannot withdraw their child from science.

What does Christ Church mean by 'Sex Education'?

At Christ Church, we make a clear distinction between statutory learning about relationships, health, puberty and the human body, and additional Sex Education relating to human reproduction.
The updated Jigsaw programme makes this distinction clearer so that parents can easily understand which content is statutory and which is non-statutory.

When is non-statutory Sex Education taught?

Under the updated Jigsaw programme, specific Sex Education content begins in Year 5, with further age-appropriate learning in Year 6.
The previous Jigsaw programme included Sex Education content in Year 4; this has now been removed.
Parents will be informed in advance before non-statutory Sex Education is taught and will be reminded of their right to request withdrawal.
In Year 5, the identified non-statutory lesson covers conception, including sexual intercourse, fertilisation, pregnancy, contraception and fertility treatment. In Year 6, the identified non-statutory lesson covers conception, pregnancy, foetal development, labour and birth, including vaginal birth and Caesarean section. These lessons are taught factually, sensitively and at an age-appropriate level.
If a parent requests withdrawal, the Headteacher will normally offer a conversation so that the lesson content, its purpose and the alternative provision are understood. A request to withdraw from the identified non-statutory primary Sex Education lesson will be granted.

Can I withdraw my child from lessons about puberty?

No.

Learning about puberty and developing bodies forms part of statutory Health Education and therefore children cannot be withdrawn from this teaching.

Children are taught this sensitively, gradually and at an age-appropriate stage. Teaching builds on previous learning so that children are prepared for changes before or as they experience them.

Why are children taught the correct names for body parts?

Using accurate, age-appropriate anatomical vocabulary is part of helping children understand their bodies and keep themselves safe.

For example, younger children may learn correct terms such as penis, testicles, vulva and anus alongside learning that private parts are private, that their body belongs to them, that they can say no to unwanted touch and that they should speak to a trusted adult if something worries them.

This learning is taught calmly and sensitively as part of safeguarding and health education.

Will children learn about different types of families?

Yes.

Children learn that families can look different and that what is important is that children experience loving, caring, safe and supportive relationships.

Teaching is age-appropriate and helps children respect the families and experiences of others. It also supports our school values of Respect, Kindness and Community.

Does PSHE teach children about LGBT relationships?

Children learn, in an age-appropriate way, that people and families are different and should be treated with dignity and respect.

In primary school, this is principally about recognising that families may be made up in different ways and ensuring that no child or family is made to feel that their family is less valued than another.

Teaching does not promote any particular lifestyle or require children to adopt particular beliefs. It helps children understand the importance of kindness, equality, respect and not discriminating against others.

How does the curriculum help keep children safe?

Safeguarding is embedded throughout Jigsaw.

The updated curriculum strengthens learning about:

- trusted adults and asking for help;
- continuing to tell someone until they are helped;
- appropriate and inappropriate touch;
- boundaries and assertiveness;
- secrets that make us feel worried or unsafe;
- online safety;
- peer pressure;
- fire, water, road and railway safety;
- recognising risks and making safe choices.

Jigsaw has also introduced the Safety STAR approach — Stop, Think, Assess, React — to help children develop practical skills for making safe decisions.

How will teachers make sure lessons are appropriate for my child?

Jigsaw is a carefully sequenced programme in which learning develops gradually from the Early Years to Year 6.
Teachers use their professional judgement and knowledge of their class to ensure lessons are appropriate to pupils' age, maturity and individual needs.
Learning will also be adapted where necessary to ensure pupils with SEND can access and understand the curriculum appropriately.
As a Church of England school, our teaching reflects our Christian vision, "Together, we flourish", and our values, while serving families of all faiths and none. We teach dignity, respect, inclusion and fairness, and make clear that bullying or discrimination is never acceptable.

What happens if a child asks an unexpected or sensitive question?

Teachers will respond in a way that is age-appropriate, factual and sensitive.
A teacher may decide that a question is better answered individually rather than in front of the whole class, or may encourage the child to discuss something further with their parent or carer. Teachers will never deliberately introduce content that is inappropriate for the children's age or stage. As with any lesson, if something a child says raises a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

Can parents see what is being taught?

Yes.
We are committed to being open and transparent with parents about our PSHE and RSHE curriculum. Parents can see our curriculum overview and policy, and further information or teaching materials can be made available for parents to view in line with the school's arrangements and Jigsaw's copyright requirements.
Parents may ask to view the detailed Jigsaw materials through the school's secure access arrangements. We will also signpost parent information and leaflets that can help families continue age-appropriate conversations at home.
The updated guidance places particular emphasis on schools being transparent with parents about RSHE materials.

Can parents decide what is included in the curriculum through this consultation?

The consultation gives parents and carers a meaningful opportunity to understand the curriculum, ask questions, raise concerns and share views.
We will carefully consider all feedback before finalising our policy.
However, some curriculum content is required by law and cannot be removed through consultation. Parents do not have a veto over statutory curriculum content, although their views should be listened to and considered when schools develop and review their approach.

What should I do if I have a question or concern?

Please use the parent consultation form to share any questions, comments or concerns.
Parents are also very welcome to contact the school directly if they would prefer to discuss something individually. We would much rather have an open conversation and answer any questions than leave a parent feeling uncertain about what their child will be learning.