

# RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION AT OUR SCHOOL

## A Guide for Parents and Carers of Students Aged 11–16

---

We know that talking about relationships, bodies, and growing up can feel daunting – for young people and for parents! That's why we want you to feel informed, involved, and confident about what your child is learning in school.

At our school, we use the **Jigsaw PSHE programme** to deliver Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). This leaflet tells you what your child will be learning, why it matters, and how you can support them at home.

---

### What is Jigsaw PSHE?

Jigsaw is a whole-school Personal, Social, Health Education programme used in schools across the UK. Known as "the mindful approach to health and well-being", it brings together emotional literacy, social skills, and mental health and resilience development in one comprehensive scheme of learning.

The Jigsaw 11–16 programme offers a holistic PSHE learning journey across a student's school career, with a **progressive, spiral curriculum** that addresses real needs in a rapidly-changing world. It is fully compliant with the statutory RSHE requirements set out by the Department for Education (DfE, 2025) and is constantly reviewed and updated to reflect the latest research and the challenges schools face – so you can feel confident your child is receiving a current, relevant education.

**The student is at the heart of the programme.** Each individual develops their relationship with themselves and others, building self-esteem as they learn to consider and manage their thoughts and feelings. Teaching strategies are varied and mindful of different learning needs, so that all students can access the learning. Underpinning everything is **the Jigsaw Approach** – rooted in mindfulness – which helps young people observe their own thoughts and feelings, manage them, and make conscious decisions about their behaviour and life choices.

---

## The Six Puzzles (Units)

The programme is organised into six units of study, called **Puzzles**, each made up of six lessons (Pieces). One Puzzle is taught per half-term throughout the school year. Every year group studies the same Puzzle at the same time, giving every student the opportunity to return to and build on each theme as they get older. In Year 11, students follow four Puzzles (rather than six) to allow time for exam preparation.

The Puzzles are:

### 1. Being Me in My World

Students consider who they are and how they fit in, develop a positive relationship with themselves, and think about how they want to contribute to their groups and society.

### 2. Celebrating Difference

Students explore how to show respect for individual difference, learn about inclusion and anti-bullying, the Equality Act and protected characteristics, and recognise what makes relationships positive – and what happens when they aren't.

### 3. Dreams and Goals

Students consider their aspirations and ambitions, develop confidence and self-belief, and build resilience and positive mental health by thinking about how to deal with setbacks. Within this Puzzle students also address topics relating to finance and economics.

### 4. Healthy Me

Students learn to value their physical and mental health, understand risks to both, how to protect their reproductive and sexual health, and develop their emotional well-being.

### 5. Relationships

Students build positive relationships by first developing a positive relationship with themselves, to then recognise and develop strategies to reject harmful relationships, and consider the impact of life events such as loss, separation and bereavement.

### 6. Changing Me

Students consider how to deal with change – including puberty, transitions (such as moving school and exams) – as well as how society is and has changed, and their thoughts and emotions in relation to changes they experience.

The RSE content sits mainly within **Relationships**, **Healthy Me**, and **Changing Me** but themes of self-worth, respect, consent, and healthy communication run throughout the whole programme.

## What Will My Child Learn?

### Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds – not just intimate relationships. It helps students understand what healthy relationships look like, what makes a good friend or colleague, and what constitutes a successful long-term commitment. It also covers contraception, developing intimate relationships, and how to resist (and not apply) pressure.

**Parents can be assured that effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation.** Research consistently shows that high-quality RSE actually delays young people's first sexual experience and helps them make safer, more informed choices. Effective RSE takes away ignorance – not innocence.

### Students aged 11–13 (Years 7 and 8) will have the opportunity to learn:

- About families, long-term relationships like marriage, parenting and their associated laws
- About respectful relationships, including friendships, trust, stereotypes, bullying, difference, illegal behaviour in relationships and where to find help
- About relationships within the context of the media and online – and the laws that are there to protect them
- About safety in relationships, including what to do if they don't feel safe
- About intimate and sexual relationships and sexual health – and how the choices they make can have a long-term impact (ensuring that topics remain age and stage appropriate)
- About the protected characteristics in the Equality Act

### Students aged 13–16 (Years 9, 10 and 11) will also have the opportunity to learn:

- That pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours and can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, exploitation, abuse and harassment
- How to actively communicate and recognise consent, and how consent can be withdrawn
- What constitutes sexual harassment and violence, and why these are always unacceptable
- The facts around pregnancy, including miscarriage
- Impartial, medically and legally accurate information relating to choices around pregnancy, and where to find help
- That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- About the prevalence of STIs, the impact they can have, how they are transmitted, how to reduce risk, and key facts about treatment

All of this is taught in the context of the whole PSHE curriculum and is underpinned by values such as inclusion and mutual respect. The emphasis is on changes students will experience as they grow up: what those changes look and feel like, why they happen, and how to manage them positively.

---

## **Health Education**

Health Education is integrated throughout the different Puzzles. Students are taught about physical health and mental well-being to help them make appropriate decisions and recognise when to seek support.

### **Students aged 11–13 (Years 7 and 8) will have the opportunity to learn:**

- About mental well-being, emotions, concerns and when and where to seek help
- About the internet, how to stay safe and what harms exist, including gambling, bullying and advertising
- About physical health and fitness, how to stay well and manage stress
- About healthy eating and what constitutes a balanced diet
- About drugs, tobacco and alcohol - the law, physical risks and dependency
- About protecting health and preventing illness, and the importance of sleep
- About basic first aid
- About how bodies change over time, particularly in adolescence

### **Students aged 13–16 (Years 9, 10 and 11) will also have the opportunity to learn:**

- That all aspects of health can be affected – positively or negatively – by choices they make in sex and relationships
  - The facts about reproductive health, including fertility, the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women, and menopause
  - How to critically evaluate when something has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health
  - Activities and participation that can positively affect mental well-being
  - The science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation
  - The importance of sufficient sleep
-

## How Can I Support My Child at Home?

Research consistently shows that young people whose parents talk openly with them about relationships and growing up make safer, healthier choices. Here are some simple ways to stay involved:

**Keep conversations open and non-judgemental.** You don't need to have all the answers – being someone your child can come to is what matters most.

**Ask about what they're learning.** A simple "What did you cover in PSHE today?" can open up a lot. If they shrug it off, that's fine – the door is open.

**Share your own values.** Jigsaw provides facts and develops skills, but you are your child's most important influence when it comes to values and beliefs. Your voice matters enormously.

**Use the language of respect.** Talk about kindness, communication, and mutual respect – not just the physical side of growing up. This builds a really strong foundation.

**Revisit topics gradually.** You don't need to cover everything in one big conversation. Little and often works much better for most families.

**Be curious, not alarmed.** If your child asks you something that surprises you, try to respond calmly. "That's a great question – let me think about that" is a perfectly good answer.

---

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Will my child be taught things that don't match our family's values?**

Jigsaw is designed to be inclusive and balanced. It presents facts and encourages young people to think critically, but it doesn't tell them what to believe. You are always welcome to talk with your child about how what they've learned fits with your own family's values.

### **Won't teaching about sex make young people more likely to do it?**

The evidence says no. Research shows consistently that high-quality RSE delays first sexual experience and reduces risk-taking. It helps young people become more confident and comfortable making informed choices.

### **Can I withdraw my child from these lessons?**

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all the Sex Education content delivered within statutory RSE. However, there is **no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education**, as these are statutory for all students. The school will discuss any request with you and help you consider the benefits to your child of receiving this important education. Please note that withdrawal applies until three terms before your child turns 16, at which point they may choose to receive Sex Education themselves.

### **Is the content age-appropriate?**

Yes. Jigsaw is carefully sequenced so that content builds gradually and is always matched to the developmental stage of the year group, as per the DfE RSHE 2025 guidance.

### **Will my child be asked personal questions or expected to share personal information?**

No. Teachers use a range of approaches - such as setting ground rules, distancing techniques, and anonymous question boxes - to ensure lessons are safe, positive learning environments for all.

### **Can I see what's being taught?**

Absolutely. Please speak to us at the school and we'll be happy to share our snapshot overviews. If you would like to see further content from the teaching materials, we will put you in touch with our PSHE lead.

---

## Find Out More

- **Speak to us:** Contact our PSHE Lead
- **School RSHE Policy:** Available on our school website
- **Jigsaw PSHE:** [www.jigsaweducationgroup.com](http://www.jigsaweducationgroup.com)
- **DfE Guidance on RSHE:** [gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education](https://gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education)

Thank you for taking the time to read this. We believe that the PSHE programme is enriched when school and home are in partnership.

This leaflet reflects the Jigsaw 11-16 PSHE programme as delivered at our school, in line with DfE statutory RSHE guidance (England, 2025). The Jigsaw programme is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current guidance and research.