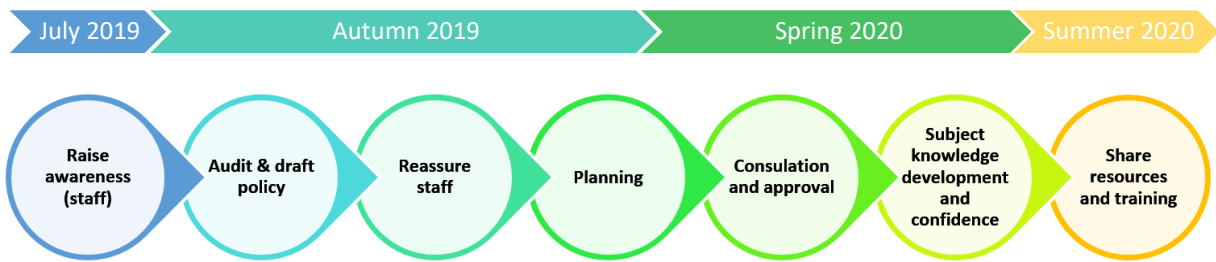


Implementation of the new RSHE statutory requirements in a primary school. Ensuring all staff are confident and understand the changes, planning and resources – a case study by South Farnham School

South Farnham School is a primary school in Surrey with 849 children on roll across two sites (112 SEND, 25 FSM). It is a Teaching School with a network of over 200 schools, a thriving SCITT (139 trainees) and appropriate body (over 100 NQTs). We already had a vibrant PSHE programme in place and as soon as the new statutory requirements for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) were released in June 2019, we knew that there were changes to be made and staff training to deliver. We embarked upon a journey to deliver the changes within our school and to share this work with other schools in the region. Our training and collated resources can be found [here](#) (please contact rshe@sft.org.uk for full access).

Stages of implementation



Awareness

Raise awareness (staff) For successful implementation of RSHE it was vital that all staff had a clear awareness of the changes that the new statutory curriculum brought to the provision of PSHE and an understanding of the content as set out within the DfE guidance. This extended to all support staff, including those with administrative and premises roles. National press attention regarding RSHE throughout 2019-20 had created a degree of uncertainty and sensitivity. This had to be addressed within both school and parent communities. All staff needed to be aware of the changes to medium term planning, the resources and vocabulary to be used and the rationale for doing so. A short introduction to RSHE was added to our staff/team meetings in July 2019.

Audit

Audit and draft policy We tasked our PSHE/RSHE Lead to conduct an audit of our provision and to identify our next steps. The audits that we used can be accessed from our website (see above).

By the end of primary school pupils should know:	RAG	Evidence to show that you are meeting the expectation	Next steps to show that you have fully met the expectation
Families and people who care for me			
That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability			
The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives			
That other's families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care for them			
That stable, caring relationships, which			

Leadership and managing change	1 (Good)
Head and SLT give RSE high status within the school	Green
There is a named governor for RSE	Green
Clear SLT support for RSE/PSHE lead	Green
Health/well-being is a standing item on the agenda at governor meetings	Green
Senior member assigned with overall responsibility for PSHE/RSE	Green
Management has strong links with secondary schools to maintain continuity of RSE delivery and supports others to deliver RSE	Yellow
Curriculum content, planning and resources	Yellow
Resources are chosen for their suitability/ effectiveness reviewed	Green
RSE is planned for across all key stages (early identified)	Green
External agencies to be involved where possible to support the curriculum	Yellow
Subject leadership	
Lead for RSE/PSHE is clearly identifiable to all staff	Green
Lead allocates time for curriculum development	Green
Lead has appropriate experience/confidence to make necessary developments with delivery, materials across the curriculum	Green
Lead is confident in own delivery	Green
Policy development	
Agreed RSE policy by governors/staff (involved parents/pupils). Agreed review dates	Green
RSE policy linked to other school policies (Child protection, Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Equal Opportunities)	Red
Follows key guidance on content for RSE policy	Yellow
Up-to-date policy is in place describing the content of RSE and is reviewed regularly	Yellow
Clear mechanism to disseminate the policy to staff, parents and pupils	Green
Planning	
RSE is taught within the science and PSHE curriculum	Green

etc.

For us, the audit highlighted areas to work on such as policy review, parental consultation, links to existing policies and content that needed to be added to our medium term planning.

In September 2019, a draft RSHE policy was devised and shared with our SLT team by our PSHE/RSHE Lead. The most challenging part of this first draft was the content relating to curriculum development and subsequent consultations (parents and governors). At this stage the curriculum team had the statutory guidance booklet and end of primary school statements to work from (this document can be found [here](#)). They hadn't had an opportunity to attend training or time to review medium term planning and lacked confidence regarding curriculum review.

Reassurance (staff)



We wanted all of our staff to understand and embrace the benefits of RSHE, to become advocates for the changes and to ensure consistency, understanding and avoid misconceptions. We have a large staff team and wanted to ensure that all staff received the same information at the same time in a time effective manner. In October 2019, teaching staff revisited the statutory changes on the horizon at a whole school staff meeting. Our PSHE/RSHE Lead shared the government timeline for implementation of RSHE alongside a simplified overview of the new content and the draft school policy (stressing the importance of inclusion under the Equality Act 2010). Staff had the opportunity to ask questions, time to reflect and to develop a deeper understanding of RSHE. Reassurance was a priority to ensure that staff felt they had sufficient training to effectively teach RSHE and be ready for the statutory changes.

One pertinent question that came up was about parental withdrawal. It was important to ensure that all staff understood that parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education (beyond what is covered by the national curriculum for science), but not from relationships education and the rationale behind this. This was discussed during the meeting with staff asking further questions regarding families with strong faith and concerns about promotion of same sex relationships/marriage. This dialogue enabled us to refine a shared vocabulary to use when explaining the changes. We would not use the term 'promoting' in this context but would work towards 'educating children about the range of different relationships in an age appropriate manner'. We ensured that all explanations came back to building positive relationships and the benefits of our existing PSHE curriculum. It was not until this was combined with scrutiny of DfE end of primary statements, examples of age appropriate resources and sample lesson plans that staff felt that there were no insurmountable issues. Age-appropriate delivery and resources were felt to be the most important aspects of future consultations and further planning.

Later the content of this initial staff meeting was refined and resulted in a [training session](#) (*Introduction to Statutory RSHE* webinar) that would be offered to other schools.

The draft policy was revisited during a PSHE/RSHE curriculum team meeting with representatives from each year group. The team were eager to get started, add to existing planning and introduce new content and resources.

Planning



Our subject lead and PSHE/RSHE curriculum team met to look through existing medium term planning for all year groups and see where the new RSHE primary statements (from published DfE guidance) matched with existing planning. New content had to be incorporated into planning, resources and delivery. An example of this would be our work on mental health and wellbeing. We revised existing lesson materials and looked to year group assemblies to further interweave key themes (i.e. *'The benefits of reducing time spent online'*,

'It is okay not to be okay' and 'What is mental health?'). New topics such as the risks and dangers of alcohol misuse had to be identified before the team could consider curriculum sequencing and look for age appropriate support materials. There were not many completely new topics to introduce and the majority of changes were minor tweaks to current content. We did take the opportunity to take a fresh look at what was available from external organisations and potential visitors to support provision.

Once we had a central overview of the provision and progression of RSHE within our school, year leads worked with their teams to develop the new content and finalise medium term planning. The important message was that everything had to be age appropriate and to instil the use of consistent emotional vocabulary.

Approval



Our Subject Lead explained what RSHE would look like at our school from autumn 2020 and shared a sample of new planning and the revised policy with Governors in spring 2020. Once provisional plans and our revised policy had been approved we moved into parent consultation. We had initially planned a face-to-face event for parents in March 2020 but due to COVID-19 related partial school closures we made the decision to send out the DfE [information leaflet for parents](#), a link to the school website area hosting RSHE resources and a video with our staff talking through the key changes and rationale for these.

We offered the opportunity for feedback, questions and further input. We wanted to ensure that parents fully understood the benefits of age appropriate RSHE and how it fits within our already effective PSHE provision. One example of an issue raised by a parent concerned the use of correct anatomical names. The parent felt that her year one child was too young to be using such vocabulary. We met with the parent and shared the specific resources, explained the approach and importance of this language when it came to safeguarding. Whilst not completely satisfied, they understood the need for consistency and did not seek to withdraw their child. This parent later contacted us in autumn 2020 to tell us how pleased they were with how sensitively the topic had been dealt with and that perhaps their initial fears had been unfounded.

Subject Knowledge and Confidence



Following dissemination of planning and resources, our subject lead led knowledge development for all staff within various team meetings. This ensured that all staff felt confident with the changes made to planning and how to deliver effective RSHE. Staff needed to be aware of the correct vocabulary, the importance of the mental health content and how to deliver lessons using the DfE recommended ground rules. Safeguarding and provision for SEND pupils formed part of this training. It was important for staff to be able to liaise with the subject lead and ask for guidance or support with the new materials.

Resources and further training



During this stage of our implementation we commenced work as a regional RSHE Hub (from June 2020). The Department for Education provided a steady stream of training modules for us to work with. As these came in our subject lead worked with the school PSHE/RSHE team, engaged subject experts and external agencies and associations. Resources were collated and a series of webpages created to support teachers with the content, changes and delivery methodology.

Further support through video tutorials and clinics for each of the DfE training modules was scheduled. This really helped to manage workload as everything became freely available and could be accessed in a central place. It has ensured our teachers know where to go to for additional support.