

RSHE Curriculum Updates – September 2026

Information for Parents and Carers

At Zaytouna Primary School, we have recently reviewed our RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) curriculum to ensure it meets new, updated government guidance and supports children's safety, well-being and personal development.

The updated 2025 guidance reflects the changing world children are growing up in and all teaching will continue to be age-appropriate, sensitive and carefully planned. The new guidance comes into effect in **September 2026** when it becomes statutory for all schools.

Below is an overview of the key changes:

1. Greater Focus on Safeguarding and Online Safety

Children are spending more time online from a younger age, so schools are now expected to teach more about staying safe in digital spaces.

Key changes to content:

- Online communication and how – although it can support meaningful in-person relationships – they can also cause tension
- Online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships
- Scams, misinformation and other financial harms that can occur during online gaming
- Their rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent

2. Increased Focus on Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Supporting children's emotional well-being is now a stronger part of the curriculum.

Key changes to content:

- Understanding emotions and understanding that feeling down is normal and not itself a sign of a mental health condition
- Coping with change, grief and loss including bereavement
- Healthy routines, including practical steps to improve sleep health such as not using screens in the bedroom
- These will be delivered sensitively and teachers are trained to respond appropriately to concerns shared

3. Physical Health Education Updates

The curriculum now includes more guidance around healthy lifestyles and making safe choices.

Key changes to content:

- The dangers of vaping and nicotine addiction – including the risk of other nicotine products such as pouches
- Increased dental health including brushing with fluoride toothpaste and cleaning between teeth
- Increased focus on the facts and science of allergies, immunisation and vaccination – taught in line with vaccination offerings in school

4. Updates to Puberty and Health Education

Puberty education remains a statutory part of Health Education and will continue to be taught sensitively and appropriately.

Key changes to content:

- Correct scientific names for body parts including ‘penis’, ‘vulva’, ‘vagina’, ‘testicles’, ‘scrotum’ and ‘nipples’ – **these will only be taught in single-sex groupings in Year 5 and Year 6**
- Menstruation and practical support including the key facts about the menstrual cycle to help girls understand what to expect and avoid distress – **only taught in single-sex groupings in Year 5**

4. Added ‘Personal Safety’ Content

A new section to the guidance – “Personal Safety” – has been included to give children a clear and explicit understanding of specific scenarios which could cause harm.

Key changes to content:

- Hazards (such as fire) can cause harm, injury and risk, as well as ways to reduce risks.
 - How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways (including level crossings) and around water (including the water safety code).
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