



An expert review of the 'All About Me' primary school Relationships and Sex Education programme

Report to Warwickshire County Council, provided by the Sex Education Forum, part of National Children's Bureau.

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Introduction

The Sex Education Forum was asked to undertake an expert review of the 'All About Me' programme for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in primary schools, including information for children, parents and professionals. The focus of the review is to provide an independent expert opinion on how closely aligned the All About Me programme, both the content and overall delivery approach, is to relevant guidance, legislation and the evidence base of effective and best practice in delivery of RSE Programmes. Should aspects of All About Me be deemed to fall outside of compulsory Relationships Education under the Government guidance, the review is to provide clarity as to which areas these are and to make recommendations to address any such issues.

References in this report to 'the Government guidance' are to the updated statutory guidance on Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (RSHE), published July 2019, which all schools are required to follow from September 2020.

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1. The overall delivery approach

1a) Comprehensive RSE programme

All About Me is a comprehensive primary RSE programme, informed by international evidence. There is very clear evidence internationally and nationally that comprehensive Relationships and Sex Education is beneficial for children and young people, see for example UNESCO 2018.

1b) Central funding by Local Authority

All About Me is centrally funded by the local authority, and free for schools at point of use, which is an efficiency.

1c) Clarity about Sex Education

All About Me includes some content that is labelled sex education and is transparent about which lessons of the programme this falls under. Government guidance recommends that primary schools teach sex education, but does not provide a complete definition of sex education and provides little direction about content. All About Me provides clear information for parents about what they can request to withdraw their child from, and complies with Government guidance on this.

Some aspects of the All About Me lessons labelled sex education cover essential puberty content. Learning about the changing adolescent body is mandatory under new Government guidance as part of Health Education.

1d) Coverage of mandatory Relationships Education and Health Education

All About Me was developed before the updated Government guidance. Nonetheless, it provides good coverage of the statutory Relationships Education content required under new legislation with the exceptions of online safety and a full range of emotions and feelings. Online safety is a particularly strong feature of the updated Government guidance.

All About Me covers some aspects of statutory Health Education, particularly puberty. It needs to be clearer that Health Education, and therefore puberty is mandatory in all schools, with no parental right to excuse children. It will be important to ensure that other aspects of Health Education (such as dental hygiene, mental health, first aid, sleep etc) are covered by schools from September 2020, whether through a revised version of All About Me or through other means.

The gaps in coverage of emotions and online safety also need to be addressed if All About Me is to provide comprehensive coverage of Relationships Education as per Government guidance.

1e) Protective Behaviours programme

All About Me has been designed to sit alongside a programme on Protective Behaviours, which, we understand, is in use in Warwickshire schools. There appears to be some overlap between the All About Me curriculum and activities run through Protective Behaviours.

1f) Science curriculum

Schools will also be taking a range of approaches to science – maintained schools will be following the National Curriculum, and may be covering aspects of sex education through science. How these pieces fit together in each school will vary and this will impact on whether or not a developmental

curriculum is provided across relationships, sex, puberty, reproduction and life-cycles, safety and help-seeking behaviour.

1g) Coherence of developmental approach

All About Me takes a developmental approach to the curriculum. However, this review recommends refinements are made to ensure a high quality, developmental learning journey for pupils. Examples are provided in section 2 below.

Ultimately schools need to ensure that they are providing a sequenced and developmental approach; with awareness of cross-curricular links, and avoidance of duplication. Curriculum planning and implementation at school level will play a large part in whether or not age-appropriate Relationships and Sex Education is provided for children. However, building in some guidance on this into the 'All About Me' programme would support schools with this process.

2. The curriculum material

2a) Origins of the curriculum material

The curriculum material has been developed locally and specifically for Warwickshire schools, but has drawn from a range of sources including Ruttgers' 'Spring Fever' programme, which originates in The Netherlands.

2b) Rights based approach

The curriculum material has a consistent tone, which is one of empowerment for children and a child rights-based approach. This is compatible with national Government guidance and emulates the rights-based approach of international guidance such as UNESCO (2018).

2c) Lesson design

Lesson plans include lesson objectives. In some cases the lesson objectives are the same for different year groups, for example in Reception, lesson 2 includes the objective 'Children will be given the opportunity to think about personal relationships and who is important in their lives. This is repeated in Year 3, lesson 2 without any greater complexity added to the objectives. Reviewing all lesson objectives and checking that there is development from one year to the next will help to secure the developmental approach to the programme.

Lesson plans would benefit from clearly identifying the key message of each lesson / activity so that teachers are emphasising the intended focus. Key messages are helpful in supporting assessment, which is covered under 2d).

Notes about activity timings and lesson length are not provided. Adding this detail would be useful for teachers.

2d) Assessment

There are opportunities for assessment for learning in the All About Me lessons, by way of discussion, group activities, and where appropriate, through individual written activities, however

the assessment outcomes need to be clearly identified in the teachers notes, and direction given on how to respond if pupils have not grasped the key messages. This is particularly pertinent in whole class activities, where a lot of feedback is given verbally in quick succession. A template for collecting class feedback would be helpful for such activities.

Government guidance creates expectations that schools monitor pupil progress in RSE. This means that a structured approach to assessment needs to be in place for RSE. There is scope to devise this and include it in the 'All About Me' programme.

2e) Learning methods

The All About Me lessons use participatory and learner-led approaches, which is in-line with evidence-based best practice for RSE.

Several of the lesson activities require personal reflection by pupils, which on a practical level can be difficult in the whole class environment, especially to ensure that teachers can explore concerns with individuals.

There is often a reliance on written activities to record learning. This will not be effective with pupils who are pre-readers and pre-writers. Differentiation [i.e. information about how to adapt learning to meet needs of more able learners and those needing more support] is not provided. Across the programme there is very little mention of differentiation for learners with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Some of the teaching resources depend too much on reading. The slides contain a considerable amount of text which will be inaccessible to younger learners. Some of the text that appears in the slides would be better as notes or prompts to the teacher, with slides focusing on visual stimulation for learners.

2f) Developmental approach and sequencing

The programme of lessons is admirable in spanning all primary years: Reception to Year 6, so has a developmental framework. However, our review found that some of the Key Stage 1 lessons would not be fully accessible to younger learners due to the style of some of the activities, delivery method and materials. A small proportion of the content is delivered rather early, and would need further context and background to make sense to pupils. A small proportion of the content is delivered rather late, and means that opportunities are missed to create a strong developmental sequence of learning, for example around puberty.

Introducing puberty is left until Year 4, which is quite late, and conception explained quite early in an isolated lesson (Year 1, lesson 4), although note that the material on conception is optional in the Year 1 lesson, which focuses on pregnancy. The learning objectives need to be reviewed so that they are all carefully matched to the age and stage of development, ensuring that when themes are revisited there is progression, and that concepts are well sequenced.

Overall, we recommend that the lesson design throughout 'All About Me' is more tightly focused to identify key messages, provide suggested timings, differentiation and assessment. In some cases activities need re-designing more substantially to achieve the intended learning. This is important to support SEND inclusion and quality learning for all pupils.

Two examples of the type of refinements recommended to be made to two single lessons within All About Me are provided in the boxes below.

Reception, lesson 4 'Me and my body'

This lesson covers similarities and differences between our bodies, differences between girls' and boys' bodies, private parts of the body including correct terms.

There is a lot of content in lesson 4 'Me and my body' which may over-run for time. Priorities for this age-group need to be about understanding the differences between boy's and girls' bodies, perhaps considering how men and women's bodies differ in appearance and covering some basic hygiene messages. The note to teacher encourages use of term vulva instead of vagina. We would recommend both vulva and vagina are used and with accuracy. Discussion of the vulva could include the vagina, describing it as a little opening, and explaining about keeping it clean, including wiping front to back. The scripting note for teachers which reads: 'It is only when we are naked we can see the real difference' could be posed as a question 'Are there any other differences we can see when we are naked?'

There is important information in the lesson about no one being allowed to touch your body without your permission. We would also recommend explaining in this context that it is fine to touch your own private parts (to wash, when using the toilet, and just if you want to), but we touch our private parts only in private. This is a key message and could be highlighted as a key message in the material for teachers. Our reading is that the references to pleasure, babies and tampons are intended as a note to teachers and not intended as topics to raise pro-actively. Pleasure, babies, tampons are issues that warrant attention at relevant points in All About Me but not in this lesson.

The reference to mouths being private is confusing given that other private parts covered in the lesson are covered by clothes to maintain privacy. The reference could be modified to discussing how any part of our bodies is ours to decide who can touch, and that we don't touch anywhere except for hands without asking, and even hands you can say no if you want.

Year 4, lesson 4 'Thoughts and feelings'

Lesson 4 revisits anger, which was also explored in a lesson in Year 2. Children are asked if they feel angry or calm themselves at the start of the lesson, and then invited to explain why. This might work for some groups but is a personal question and carries an element of risk for personal disclosure or generally not getting off to a good start. Activity 4.12 asks children to decide if they would feel angry or calm in response to a set of scenarios. This is fine as an activity but need to be aware that there are a range of other emotions and strong feelings that children may feel about these sort of scenarios including sad, anxious, jealous. The lesson objectives focus on understanding anger, but overall pupils need to be supported to articulate a wider range of emotions.

3. Parent materials and approach

3a) Information sheets

The materials reviewed comprised a set of information sheets for parents on themes ranging from 'private parts' to 'periods and menstruation' as well as some background information explaining aspects of the All About Me programme as a whole, such as the lesson grid. The material addresses several important issues, however, the focus on 'issues' that typically worry parents means that broader content around healthy relationships does not feature.

The information sheets are generic for all parents and are not written with different aged children in mind. One option would be to develop the parent support materials to go step by step from reception through to secondary school, thus supporting a parent in relation to the age of their child and over time.

The information sheets have been individually reviewed. There are several instances where further work is needed to ensure accuracy, accessibility for a wide range of parents and a consistent structure and style. Examples of recommendations made in the review are provided in the text boxes featured in the sections below.

3b) Web access

The parent material has formerly been hosted on a website, which was freely accessible to parents. In order to assess the usefulness of the material it would be important to know where, when and how the web materials for parents are promoted, and to review data about the extent to which the web materials are in reality accessed by parents, and any feedback that parents have about them. Going forward, it will be important to consider if web-based material is the most effective way to engage with a wide range of parents about RSE.

3c) Language and accessibility

The style of language used in the parent documents tends to assume that parents will be supportive of and familiar with an open and informal style of talking about sex and relationships with their children. To be helpful to a wider range of parents the material needs to acknowledge the full range of cultural and faith backgrounds and different levels of familiarity and comfortableness with RSE. For example, some parents have English as a second language making it harder to access the colloquialisms. It would be useful to have feedback from parents about the amount of information they would like / have time to read, and about the format they find most useful.

3d) Information session hosted at schools

As part of the All About Me support, schools are offered a parent information session, which we were informed 'usually lasts an hour and can be delivered at the schools discretion'. Schools are encouraged to book at a time that will 'capture the most engagement from parents'. The content of the parent session is described as covering: 'The background to the programme; the new statutory guidance; what the programme covers; talking through key messages; how parents can support the programme at home.'

Example of review of two individual parent information sheets:

Review of parent information sheet: 'Periods and the menstrual cycle'

This information sheet makes useful points about demystifying periods and the fact that both boys and girls need to learn about them and should do so. The focus on practical information that parents can discuss with their children is the most useful aspect of this. Clarity is needed that a period is menstrual bleeding, i.e. blood. The option of using a menstrual cup could be added. There is an image of a menstrual cup, but they are not mentioned in the text, whereas period pants are mentioned, but not pictured. If there is any provision in school to provide menstrual products this could be explained as some families are in poverty and may be concerned about how they will afford menstrual products.

There is no information sheet about puberty more broadly. It would be helpful to cover wet dreams with practical information and discussion prompts for parents to support boys to be prepared for wet dreams.

It would be helpful to give parents information about sources of further information and advice, for example information from The Eve Appeal, which also includes useful information to support parent health: <https://eveappeal.org.uk/news-awareness/educatingevepart1/>

Review of parent information sheet: 'Touching yourself'

This document starts from an assumption that parents are comfortable with the idea of their children touching their own genitals. This will not be the starting point for all parents, for a range of different reasons.

The opening paragraph states that "As part of teaching safe and appropriate touching, we need to also talk to children about touching themselves and self-stimulation". As highlighted in the review of curriculum materials, self-stimulation is not a term that is widely used, and could be seen as quite a challenging notion for some parents.

This information sheet focuses purely on 'touching yourself' but it could have a wider focus relating to touch and consent, for example covering a cluster of key messages that children need to be taught: 'it's OK to touch your own vulva / penis', 'it's not OK to touch other people's vulva / penis', 'it's not OK for other people to touch your vulva / penis' (giving exceptions, with rules).

3e) Alignment with good practice and government guidance

The inclusion of bespoke parent materials as part of the All About Me support is a positive feature and supported by good practice and the evidence base that children want their parents to be more involved in RSE and that RSE is more effective when they are involved.

The provision of information to parents is aligned with new Government guidance on RSE which requires that schools '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 statutory RSE' (DfE, 2019).

It is unclear to what extent information provided at the face-to-face parent session is supported by regular communication about the RSE programme, for example it would be useful to know if parents are updated prior to or during the delivery of All About Me lessons about the timing and themes of lessons. It is likely that these decisions are left to individual schools, and therefore important that ownership is taken by schools for ongoing communication, rather than a one-off. It would be good practice, and in line with Government guidance to build regular communication with parents about RSE.

Government guidance also requires that parents are consulted about RSE provision and their views listened to. While dialogue may be taking place at school level, there is no material within All About Me which shows what this looks like in practice. It is important to take opportunities to hear parent views, and be responsive to them, for example building in a quick evaluation activity at the end of a face-to-face parent session, or providing a survey that asks for parents to comment about the RSE provision. Schools need to be able to approach their delivery of All About Me with some flexibility so that they can be responsive to their local community.

4. Professional materials

4a) The overall approach

The provision of a fairly comprehensive set of guidance documents to support staff delivering All About Me is an important component of the programme which will contribute to the quality of delivery. The support provided for staff also includes: initial briefing for school staff, with governors invited; bespoke support and training which can include phone calls, emails and further meetings. Examples of material such as training session outlines were not available to review.

It is good practice that school staff are trained to deliver All About Me and that schools are taking ownership of delivery through their own staff.

The guidance documents suggest that teacher feedback is built into ongoing development of All About Me, however we did not see evidence of feedback received from teachers and how this had been acted on.

4b) Policy information and ‘policy template document’

The policy template document is a substantial and thorough document with numbered paragraphs which are referenced in the analysis below. There are some elements which schools can adapt and write in themselves but most of the content is provided. It will be very helpful for schools to have such a lot of material to draw from, but there is a risk of over-dependency on the template and schools not engaging sufficiently with their responsibility to devise and own a policy that is tailored to their school and evolves from consultation with pupils and parents.

Our review provided detailed feedback on this document. Some examples of changes recommended are as follows:

- The term ‘same sex marriage’ should be used as the term in paragraph 10 instead of ‘gay marriage’ in order to replicate wording in legislation.

- Clarification is needed to explain that puberty is part of mandatory Health Education. This is important as it needs to be separated from content that parents can request to excuse their child from.
- Paragraph 80 and 81 contain useful information about pupil workbooks and pupil progress. If this is part of a structured approach to assessment this needs to be explained.

Overall this is a long policy template. It could be used to underpin school policies, but could be shortened. The template would benefit from highlighting places where schools can add further detail to the policy, which would then give it a flavour of their own school ethos.

4c) Accuracy and language across the professional guidance documents

The quality and referencing of some of the information sheets needs to be addressed, but the range of issues they cover is relevant, useful and fairly comprehensive in addressing typical issues that teachers seek help with. In reviewing each of the professional guidance documents individuals we highlighted aspects that need further referencing, rewording or other development. Examples are provided in the boxes below.

Review of professional guidance document: 'The Equality Act and Being Inclusive'

This section would benefit from further organising to be clear about different bits of legislation; what applies to curriculum and what is 'whole-school'. A correction is needed - the Equality Act 2010 applies to how the curriculum is delivered, **not** the content. Also it would be helpful if the information about The Equality Act is related to the 'All About Me' programme. The references to The Equality Act included in the updated Government (RSE) guidance could be made.

...Teachers may be looking for more illustrations here of inclusive practice and how to challenge homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language and bullying. Signposting out to relevant online guidance as well as the book list would be useful.

Review of professional guidance document: 'Answering questions'

This is a clearly written document with a helpful set of bullet points which provide a practical approach for teachers. It would be helpful to create more read across between 'answering questions' and 'ground rules' as the 'ground rules' page does not really touch on some questions being inappropriate for particular age-groups.

There is a helpful point about being aware of parents: 'If a particular child asks a question you know their parent's may be uncomfortable with, you may choose to delay answering the question (as above) until they have spoken to the parent/carer if possible and talk through their response'. However there will need to be clarification, at a school level, about how this is managed. For example, will the teacher know if any parents have opted the child out of sex education content? Are there mechanisms to notify parents about questions that are asked in class so that parents might answer them at home?

5. Recommendations

5a) Revising and developing the All About Me curriculum content

There is much that is good quality about the All About Me curriculum material, and a large volume of content. A number of revisions and developments could be made to improve the material as follows:

- The lesson objectives should be reviewed as a whole to create more precisely defined progression from one year to the next and to ensure logical sequencing. We would expect some adjustments to be made as a result of this process, for example some content moving up and some down the years.
- The format of the lessons changed so that key messages are identified, assessment opportunities built in, timings included and differentiation provided.
- Changes made to some of the curriculum resources to reduce reliance on reading and writing, particularly in the earlier years, improve SEND accessibility and to reduce the frequency of reflective activities carried out individually.
- Consider creating key vocabulary lists for each lesson / unit, which would demonstrate sequencing around key concepts, and would support teachers in quickly finding age-appropriate words.

These revisions and developments should be considered in relation to further recommendations below.

5b) All About Me coverage in relation to guidance, other subjects and initiatives

Our review has commented on the overlap between All About Me and Protective Behaviours lessons, but further work is needed to assess quite how substantial the overlap is.

Gaps in relation to the content stipulated in the Government guidance on RSHE have been identified, particularly the sparse references in All About Me to online safety, and limited range of emotions that are discussed. Puberty is the only content from Health Education that is fully covered in All About Me.

One option is to adapt the existing All About Me programme to fully address specifics of online safety and the online context and extend the range of emotions and feelings covered. This would create a full RSE programme that covers the Relationships Education requirements in their entirety.

Teaching about the full range of content under Health Education is a bigger task, and not what All About Me was ever designed to do. However, with statutory Relationships Education and Health Education required from September 2020 this would be a good time to consult schools about their plans to meet the full requirements and assess what their needs are to do this well.

A piece of mapping work could be undertaken to see if Protective Behaviours covers aspects of Government RSHE guidance, and to determine the extent of overlap between Protective Behaviours and All About Me.

We recommend that schools are consulted about how they deal with the overlap between All About Me and Protective Behaviours, and how much time they devote to delivering each in

practice. An outcome from this might be to revise some of the lengthy activities in All About Me to focus learning.

Curriculum content on puberty needs to be identified under mandatory Health Education to ensure that pupils are not unnecessarily removed from this if parents request to withdraw from sex education lessons.

If revisions are made to All About Me curriculum material, we recommend presenting the lesson materials in a more flexible manner, highlighting that Government guidance recommends that curriculum is responsive to pupil needs and that adaptations are needed at school level to create a coherent curriculum across RSHE and science.

5c) Involvement of teachers and school staff

Creating a mechanism to involve a small group of teachers and school staff more intensively in the evaluation and review of All About Me would be an effective way to make progress on many of the findings from this review. A working group of 'RSE champions', or 'RSE leads', if properly supported and resourced, would be capable of reviewing the lesson objectives, working through changes to lesson format etc. A working group could serve as a resource for supporting teacher training, with the champions / leads available to model high quality RSE delivery to colleagues through shadowing, observation etc. It would be important to involve Teaching Assistants and SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinators) in the group. With time, the creation of a local RSE working group may help with sustainability and support professional growth for school staff.

Information sheets and guidance for professionals included in All About Me need to be updated and revised, as per the comments provided on individual documents.

5d) Involvement of children and young people

The All About Me lessons take a child rights-based approach to RSE and provide many opportunities for interaction and pupil-led discussion. The review did not find information explaining the 'co-production' work with children. We did not find inbuilt pupil evaluation or a review process at the end of each unit or year's work. There is also no information about pupil consultation about RSE at school level.

Government guidance states that schools should be consulting pupils. This could take the form of a focus group, class activity or anonymous feedback and could be focused on understanding how well the current RSE offer meets pupils' needs. This needs to be happening at school level in every school, but the All About Me programme could have a role in advising schools about this and supporting pupil consultation in practice. Revisions to the All About Me curriculum material could include end of unit evaluation activities, which would contribute to a cycle of evaluation and review.

5e) Involvement of parents and carers

All About Me is thorough in informing parents and carers about the nature of the programme and of parental rights to request their child is excused from sex education. However, the information sheets provided to parents need re-structuring, with consideration given to how the sheets are

accessed and by who, the style of language, how information is organised and what the overall aims are of the parent support package. More emphasis could be placed on signposting parents to other sources of help and advice to support them in their role at home. The material needs to become accessible to the widest possible range of parents, so we recommend using a range of channels to disseminate. The different roles of school and local authority need to be considered. The local authority might disseminate more generic information using relevant media and channels. Schools will have existing dissemination channels to their parent communities.

Schools are required to consult parents about RSE. Government advice is that this means listening to parent views, not having a parental veto on curriculum content. Currently the All About Me programme supports schools with information sessions, but schools will also need to devise ways of actively listening and creating regular communication with parents about RSE. This could involve an invitation to respond to a short survey annually after each RSE unit is completed, and could capture whether or not discussion prompted by All About Me lessons is taking place at home.

Overall, the respective roles of the local authority and individual schools in relation to parents and RSE need to be understood and made clear throughout All About Me. Government guidance is clear that schools have a responsibility to consult their parents, communicate with parents about RSE and take their own decisions about how they deliver RSE. The local authority has broader responsibilities, for example around public health and parenting strategies, and will want to add value for schools.

5f) Current gaps in national information and advice

This review highlights gaps in the advice available to support both local authorities and schools with the implementation of statutory, high quality RSHE. For example, there is a lack of national information defining sex education that could support schools with their policies. It would also be helpful for Government to refer to models of developmental, age-appropriate learning in RSE. The Department for Education has begun delivering a programme of implementation support for RSHE, which will include further implementation guidance, case-studies and training for schools. Nationally, there is a need for publicly accessible material about internationally accepted models of normal child sexual development, provided both in parent-friendly formats and to support professionals.

5g) Flexibility, sustainability and roles of school and local authority

RSE programmes do need to be live documents, able to adapt and develop as legislation changes and to be relevant to the lives of children and to involve parents and carers. Government guidance affords flexibility to schools to devise their own RSE programmes which meet pupil needs and can be responsive to parent views. All About Me has been developed as a local authority offer, and is presented as an 'off the shelf' programme for schools to pick up and deliver in its entirety, as opposed to a set of materials that schools might be guided by and adapt from.

We recommend that the next stage for All About Me involves local schools, with teacher feedback on many of the points highlighted in this review, for example through a core group of RSE / PSHE leads drawn from a range of local schools. Feedback from pupils and parents needs to be documented and integrated into future iterations of the programme. Across the curriculum

material, parent and professional material there is a need for updating and ensuring complete accuracy, responding to the detailed points made to the full collection of material that was subject to this review.

While the extensive advice, guidance, training and material provided through the All About Me package will no doubt be welcome to schools, there also needs to be a shared understanding that schools have ultimate responsibility for their policy, for their parent and pupil consultation and for ensuring that the programme they deliver provides a coherent curriculum offer for pupils.

We recommend looking at the nature of support for RSE being offered in other Local Authorities as this would help benchmark the Warwickshire County Council offer. It would also be advisable to establish specific objectives for the Local Authority support offer as it develops in future, and to measure these using Key Performance Indicators and ongoing evaluation.

6. References

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7. Appendix 1

Extracts from the Government RSE guidance (2019) about involving parents:

40. The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

41. All schools should 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.

42. Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSE. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach help increase confidence in the curriculum.

43. Many schools build a good relationship with parents on these subjects over time – for example by inviting parents into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues. This can be an important opportunity to talk about how these subjects contribute to wider support in terms of pupil wellbeing and keeping children safe. It is important through such processes to reach out to all parents, recognising that a range of approaches may be needed for doing so.

44. Many schools will have existing mechanisms in place to engage parents and should continue to draw on these as they respond to the new legal framework.

8. About the Sex Education Forum

The Sex Education Forum (SEF) is the leading national authority on RSE, founded in 1987 and part of the National Children's Bureau (NCB) family. Our work is based on [ten evidence-based principles for good quality RSE](#). We regularly consult young people about RSE and continually support schools to develop their RSE practice through a nationwide network of members who receive regular bulletins and access resources via our website. SEF is first point of contact for the sector for policy influencing and information, and provides a voice into government for young people and practitioners. SEF has credibility with the Department for Education, Government Equalities Office, teaching unions, public health bodies and children's charities. We have been a trusted source of balanced advice about RSE for three decades.

The lead reviewer, Lucy Emmerson, is Director of the Sex Education Forum. Lucy is experienced in designing and delivering high quality evidence-based resources and training for teachers and other educators and has worked on national RSE research projects funded by the Education Endowment Fund and National Institute for Health Research.