

Right of Withdrawal of Students from Relationship and Sex Education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, but parents will not be able to withdraw their children from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education (which includes learning about the changing adolescent body and puberty).

Before granting any such request, the head teacher will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The school will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

It is important to discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead).

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school can make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

In primary education from September 2020, parents will not be able to withdraw their children from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education (which includes learning about the changing adolescent body and puberty). Parents will be able to withdraw their children from any aspects of Sex Education other than those which are part of the science curriculum. (Note that sex education will not be statutory in primary schools, however the new statutory guidance makes clear that schools should still provide a programme of age appropriate sex education)