

Relationships and Sex Education

Parents/Carers guide to
talking to children about
relationships and sex
education.



Parent/Carer Survey

Thank you very much to all parents/carers who completed the online survey about PSHE teaching at Mountbatten Primary School. A number of parents/carers asked for more information on what can be done at home to help with relationships and sex education. This presentation will give you some useful starting points and information on how you can help educate your child at home. Another frequently asked question was curriculum content and at what age children are taught different topics. For specific curriculum content and coverage please see the 'Parent Overview' links on the PSHE tab for information on what is taught in each year group.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

Promoting positive attitudes towards their health and wellbeing is an important part of children's overall education. As part of PSHE lessons at Mountbatten Primary School, your child will be taught about relationships. This is done through a series of lessons using the Jigsaw program. All lessons will be age appropriate and will look at a range of topics from; growing up and puberty to self esteem and e-safety. We believe it is vital that children understand what a healthy relationship is and how to keep themselves safe in an ever changing world.

Why is this important?

Honest, open and factual education about relationships and growing up gives children the opportunity to learn accurate, truthful information in a safe and secure environment. We want our pupils to be able to ask any questions they may have about their bodies and thoughts. We will never answer inappropriate questions but will always endeavour to address any misconceptions children have about relationships and sex education.

It is important to note that discussing relationships and growing up with children won't encourage them to engage in sexual relationships any sooner. Evidence shows that children whose parents talk about puberty, growing up and relationships openly and who receive relationships education at school are more likely to make safer and informed decisions later in life.

Knowing what to say and when

It can be difficult to know at what age a child should know something in particular in regards to relationships and sex education. Generally, if a child is asking a parent/carer a question, they are probably ready to receive a truthful answer. All children are different and some are more curious than others. There are a few general guidelines about what children are able to understand at various ages and how to discuss these topics with your child.

LGBTQ+

Teaching children about diversity and that there are different families and lifestyles should be taught from a young age. This will save difficult questions and confusion when they are older. Having open discussions with your children about diversity will allow them to become accepting and respectful of other people's views and beliefs as they grow up.

Names for body parts

Scientific names (penis, testicles etc) for body parts should be introduced as soon as the child can name body parts. This will allow them to understand a range of concepts as they grow up such as consent and safeguarding themselves from potential harm.

Respect

Teaching children to respect their own and others' bodies and the privacy and wishes of another person can begin at a very early age; these values are the foundations they need to engage in consensual loving relationships when they get older.

Having a baby

A new baby arriving in the family or a friend's family can provide the perfect opportunity to answer any questions your child may have about how babies are made or how they arrive into the world. You know your own child very well and will be able to know what extent of information they need on this topic.

Changing Bodies and Growing Up

It is very important that children learn about the changes their body will go through before it happens. Generally, it is important for girls to learn about periods before they are around 9 years of age and for boys to learn about how their bodies will change before they are around 11 years of age. This will allow them to ask any questions they may have so they are not fearful for when changes do occur. Chat to them in an open and honest way about your own experiences with change and allow them to tell you any concerns they may have, so that you can comfort and reassure them that these changes are natural and important.

Being caught off guard

If your child asks a question at an inappropriate time, or you are caught off-guard and need time to prepare your answer, you could reply with 'that's a good question, can we talk about that a little bit later?'. Make sure you do come back to the topic as soon as possible, when you are ready. You may not wish to answer the exact question they answered. If you feel it was inappropriate, explain your reasons to them and tell them that they do not need to know that right now but when they are a little older you will answer the question they have.

YOU are the chosen one

Sometimes when children ask questions about their bodies or sex, you may feel embarrassed or think they shouldn't know about anything like that until they are much older. However, it is really important to recognise that they feel safe around you and if they ask you a question it is probably because they trust that you will give them the correct answer. It is really important that children feel they can ask questions and know they can get an honest answer without being judged. If a child feels that these topics are wrong or taboo, they will have no one to get facts from and that is when they piece information together which can be incomplete, misleading or just totally incorrect. Making the subjects of growing up, relationships, LGBTQ+ and reproduction a normal part of life promotes positive attitudes towards health, wellbeing and relationships.