



RSE guidance notes for teachers: Reception, Years 3, 4 5 & 6

This guidance is to support teachers if they have questions or situations arise that they feel unsure or uncomfortable dealing with

Answering questions:

When a child asks a question that you cannot answer because the answer is outside the scope of your year group curriculum, you should:

- Acknowledge the question and give the message it is okay to ask eg *'Thanks for asking that question / that's an interesting one'*
- Check out the context of the child's question before you give an answer eg *'Tell me a bit about where you heard about that'*
- If you are unsure if you should answer the question, buy yourself some time by responding *'Thanks for answering that question. I'll have a think and get back to you'*. You can consult a colleague but it is important you do get back to the child even if it is to say it is a question you are not able to answer
- A good reassuring answer is *'I'm not sure how to answer that question – I suggest you ask someone at home'*.
- You **must** let parents know if there is a specific question their child has asked that you have been unable to answer so they are aware and can deal with it appropriately

Gathering questions: there are different ways to elicit questions eg

- 'Ask it Basket' where children can write their questions either with names or anonymously
- Group tasks where children decide their top 3 questions they want to ask
- Ask for a friend: this is useful for children who are shy or reluctant to ask questions

The following is a guide to how to answer some typical questions – **you must differentiate your answers dependent on your year group curriculum:**



Questions	Possible responses
How do babies get there?	Explain that a baby is made inside and then grows inside their mother. A seed (sperm) from the father and an egg from the mother join together and then a baby starts to grow. More details about sexual reproduction might be given in Y5/6
Why can't men have babies?	Men and women have different body parts. Only a woman has a uterus (womb) where a baby can grow. Both men and women are needed to start the baby. Both parents are responsible for the baby when it is born.
How can two mummies and two daddies have a baby?	<i>This question might arise if a child knows of a same-sex family</i> There are lots of different ways of being a family. Families are the people who look after, love and care for their children together. When two people of the same sex want to have a baby together, they can't make a baby on their own. Sometimes a same-sex couple might adopt a baby. Sometimes they might have a child from a previous relationship. Sometimes they might choose to use sperm donated by a male, or an egg given by a female. This will be organised by a medical professional. There are always an egg and a sperm to make a baby.
How are twins made?	Twins are two babies who have the same mother and father, who grow inside their mother at the same time and are born at the same time. Some twins look the same as each other, others are different. Identical twins are made when a sperm joins with an egg and then the egg splits in two whilst travelling through the Fallopian tube to the uterus. Non-identical twins are when a woman releases two eggs and both are joined by two sperm. Very rarely are more than two babies born at the same time. These are called triplets, quadruplets, quintuplets or sextuplets.
How does the egg meet the sperm?	The man puts his penis inside the woman's vagina. The sperm travels through the penis and into the females' Fallopian tubes where the egg and sperm meet and a baby may begin. For some families, a doctor helps an egg and sperm to join together. This way of starting a baby is called IVF.
Are all babies made inside their mother?	No sometimes a doctor needs to help and the baby is begun outside the mother and put safely in the womb to grow there. This is called IVF – invitro fertilisation
Do some babies die?	Yes, sometimes babies are stillborn, which means they die inside their mother's womb before they are born and sometimes babies die just after they are born. If this happens the parents and their family will be very sad and upset.
Does having a baby hurt?	Explain that giving birth does hurt the mother, but that the pain can be controlled in various ways, sometimes using medicines. The pain goes away after the baby is born.
How does the baby come out?	Babies may be born in two ways. When the baby is ready to be born, the entrance to the womb opens up and then squeezes very hard to push the baby out through the vagina (special tube). Sometimes this process is difficult and a midwife or a doctor need to help a baby be born. If there is a danger to the baby or the mother,



	<p>a doctor may make a small slit in the abdomen and uterus and bring the baby out of the womb directly. This method of having a baby is called a caesarean section.</p>
Why do boys have balls?	<p>A boy's testes are the place where, when he is older, his seeds (sperm) are made. Sperm will begin to be produced during puberty. When a boy's body is grown enough to make the sperm, the testes drop down a little bit, so they are further away from the body and can keep cool. The sperm needs to be a bit cooler than the rest of the body.</p>
What is circumcision?	<p>It is an operation to remove the fold of skin at the top of a boy's penis. Some boys are circumcised because of their parent's religion (mainly Judaism or Islam) and some for medical reasons. It does hurt a little bit but because it is usually done when a boy is very small, it doesn't hurt very much. It makes no difference if a boy's penis is circumcised or not, it still works the same.</p>
What is FGM?	<p>Female Genital Mutilation: explain that everyone has a right over their own bodies and especially their private parts. Explain that this is illegal in our country and is classed as a form of abuse.</p>
Why do people have sex if they don't want babies?	<p>Sex is one way for a couple who love and trust each other to show their love. Sex involves being very physically close to and intimate with the other person and should feel very nice for both people. So adults who love each other might choose to have sex as part of their relationship, even if they don't want to have a baby.</p>
Can people stop babies from being made?	<p>Yes. Having a baby is such a responsible thing to do that grown-ups might decide it is not the right time for them to have a baby. There are different ways of stopping a baby being made, some ways stop the sperm meeting the egg and some stop the egg from being released into the mother's womb. Because having a baby is such an important decision to make, adults should think very carefully before having a baby.</p>
What is HIV/AIDS?	<p>It is a virus which can't be cured but can be controlled with medicines. It is passed by the semen, fluid from the vagina, breast milk and blood of someone who is HIV positive.</p>
Why does it mean to say someone is gay?	<p>People often call themselves gay if they love someone of the same sex eg if a woman loves another woman. Some people use the word homosexual. We don't know why some people are gay (homosexual) and others are straight (heterosexual), it's just the way they are. It isn't right to use the word gay to insult someone. Being gay is just the way some people are and we should respect everyone, whoever they are.</p>
Why are some people bisexual?	<p>People might call themselves bisexual if they are attracted to males and females.</p>
When is it normal to start a period?	<p>Most girls start their periods between 10 and 14 but some start earlier or later than that.</p>
What age can you have sex?	<p>The law says that a person under 16 years can't agree to have sex and therefore it is illegal to have sex with someone under 16. When someone is deciding whether to have sex it is very important to think about their feelings for the other person. Sex is one way two people show that they love and trust each other and is something that should be thought about very carefully. Everyone has the right to say no to sex, however old they are, even if they are in a relationship with the person who wants to have sex with them.</p>



What is a blow job?	Check out what the child thinks this means first and refer them to their parents for a further explanation.
Why do some people touch their private parts?	Some people do this because it feels nice. A boy might touch his penis and a girl might touch her clitoris. Some adults and young people masturbate and there is nothing wrong about it, but it is something that should be done in private and in a hygienic way.
Why do some people watch porn?	Check a child's understanding of the word porn. Refer them to their parents for a further explanation.
What is a prostitute?	Check a child's understanding and refer them to their parents for a further explanation
What is abortion?	Abortion is when a baby stops growing inside its mother and is pushed or taken out of the womb a long time before it is ready to be born. This means the baby dies. Sometimes this happens because the parents decide they do not want a baby; sometimes it happens of its own accord – this is called a miscarriage.
What is a paedophile?	An adult who sexually attracted to children. Some adults may touch a child's private parts eg parents to wash them, doctor to examine them. If another adult touches a child's body, particularly their private parts, or asks a child to touch them or look at images or videos, the child must tell a trusted adult or phone Childline.
What is rape?	Refer the child to their parents for further explanation.