

Paradigm Trust Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education survey executive summary and response

July 2026

Context

In September 2026 the government's updated Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) guidance becomes statutory. To prepare for this, the Paradigm Trust PSHE network group prepared a proposed draft policy based on the new guidance. In March and April of 2026, information meetings were held in each of the seven Trust schools to meet with parents/carers, to inform them of the changes in the updated guidance and to launch the engagement process on the Trust's proposed draft policy. Following on from this, a month long consultation was held where parents/carers could give their views on the changes. This document summarises those responses. An appendix to this document lists all questions with verbatim parent/carer comments where given.

Overview of responses

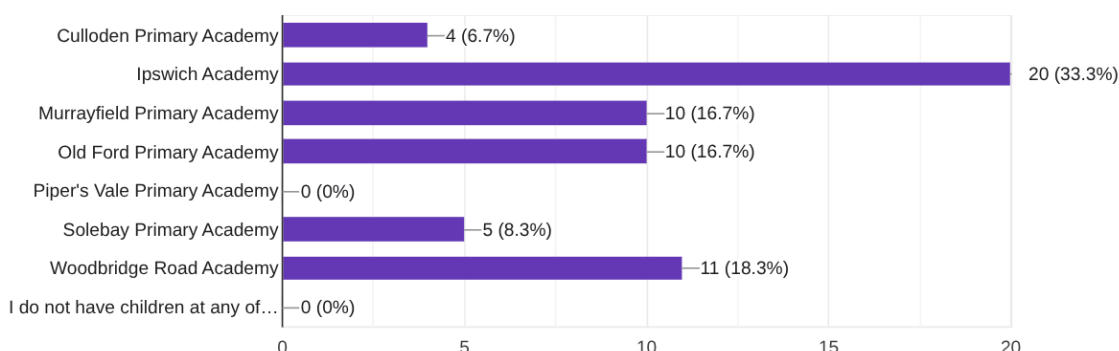
60 responses were received in total across the seven Trust schools. This is approximately a 1.7% response rate. The school with the most responses

was IA with 20. The school with the fewest responses was CPA with 4. One school, PVPA, had no responses.

2. What school does your child/children attend? (tick all that apply)

 [Copy chart](#)

60 responses



Questions 1-4 asked for the respondent's name (optional), which school the parent/carer's child attended and whether they had attended an information meeting. 13 of the 60 people responding to the survey attended one of the RSHE information meetings (22%).

All of the respondents were parents/carers with at least one child at a Trust school. There were no external responses received. 32 of the respondents gave their name, the remaining 28 answered anonymously.

The greatest number of **positive** responses was received for Question 10: 'Do you agree with the updated Health Education content in the draft policy?' 60% (36 people) agreed or strongly agreed with this.

The greatest number of **negative** responses was received for Question 8: *'Do you agree that the content of Relationships Education will provide pupils with sufficient knowledge for positive relationships?'* 13% of respondents (8 people) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this. The table below shows full results (figure in brackets indicates number of individual responses).

	Agree/strongly agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree/strongly disagree
Q6. Do you agree that Paradigm Trust's updated RSHE draft policy is an accurate reflection of the government's updated statutory guidance?	58% (35 people)	33% (20 people)	8% (5 people)
Q7. Do you agree with the updated Relationships Education content in the draft policy?	55% (33)	33% (20)	12% (7)
Q8. Do you agree that the content of Relationships Education will provide pupils with sufficient knowledge for positive relationships?	55% (33)	32% (19)	13% (8)
Q9. Do you agree with the updated Sex Education content in the draft policy? (Year 6 and secondary)	57% (34)	32% (19)	12% (7)
Q10. Do you agree with the updated Health Education content in the draft policy?	60% (36)	32% (19)	8% (5)
Q11. Do you agree that the updated Health Education content will help pupils lead a healthy lifestyle?	55% (33)	35% (21)	10% (6)
Q12. Do you agree with the RSHE content	58%	30%	12%

taught as part of the statutory National Curriculum for Science?	(35)	(18)	(7)
Q13. Do you agree that the right to withdraw is explained in the draft policy with sufficient clarity?	58% (35)	30% (18)	12% (7)
Q14. Do you agree with the use of the Jigsaw scheme to deliver RSHE?	55% (33)	35% (21)	10% (6)

Question 5 asked, *'If you attended a parent/carer information meeting, how clearly do you feel the government's updated guidance was explained?'* Of the 13 people across the Trust who attended a meeting and responded to the survey, all but 1 person thought it was explained clearly.

Although there were a wide range of comments given, they tended to follow certain themes. The following points summarise the reasons given for **agreeing/strongly agreeing** with the guidance and draft policy:

Alignment with Standards:

Many parents feel the updated policy is a 'positive step' and appreciate its general alignment with government statutory guidance.

Essential Life Skills:

Respondents noted that teaching about positive relationships and health is 'important for survival' and helps provide pupils with the 'sufficient knowledge' needed to navigate the adult world.

Early Prevention:

Some parents support early education on these topics to prevent children from 'hitting the adult world before they need to' and to help them avoid making major life mistakes before adulthood.

Curriculum Integration:

There is support for teaching RSHE as part of the statutory science curriculum, as it 'takes away the taboo' often associated with standalone sex education lessons.

Clarity on Parental Rights:

The majority of respondents who commented on the 'right to withdraw' felt it was 'explained well' and with 'sufficient clarity' in the draft policy.

Jigsaw Scheme:

The Jigsaw delivery scheme was praised as 'good educational material' and 'scheduled well,' provided it is used with an understanding of children's opinions.

The following points summarise the reasons given for **disagreeing/strongly disagreeing** with the draft policy and guidance:

Age Appropriateness:

A concern was that some content, particularly sex education and contraception, is 'not relevant in primary' and should be reserved for secondary school when children are 'more mature'.

Concerns for Young Children:

Some parents strongly feel that children as young as four do not need to be taught these subjects and that teaching them too early might 'encourage young children to explore' prematurely.

Suitability for SEN Pupils:

There are concerns that the curriculum may not be fully accessible or appropriate for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) who may not understand the content 'as much as a child without SEN needs'.

Desire for More Parental Control:

Some negative feedback suggests that the right to withdraw should be extended beyond sex education to other sections of the curriculum, or that these topics should be the sole responsibility of parents.

Religious and Cultural Sensitivity:

Concerns were raised that certain topics might clash with 'culture and religion,' with a suggestion that more involvement from parents is needed when these areas are questioned.

Requests for More Information:

Parents expressed a desire for more detailed 'individual plans' or lesson topics in advance so they can choose to discuss the topics at home first.

Response to feedback

There was a very low response to the survey from parents/carers across the Trust. The number of respondents across all seven schools was 60 out of a total possible number of 3,245 pupils. This represents a response rate of 1.7%. Of the 60 parents/carers who responded, only 13 of them attended an information meeting in person. This potentially contributed to the large proportion of respondents who answered 'neither agree or disagree' to the questions since they may have felt that they didn't know enough to answer honestly. (This accounted for over 30% of answers to each question.) Going forward, the Trust could engage with parents/carers to find out more about the low attendance at these meetings and to try and improve attendance in future.

It is also important to note that this engagement process was about the proposed updates to the Relationships Education and Sex Education curriculum - not the existing content of the National Curriculum for Science or Health Education curriculum. These areas were included in the

engagement process in the interests of transparency and because there is some crossover between the areas.

Several respondents stated that they believed that their child was too young to learn this content. The Jigsaw scheme of work used by the Trust comes recommended by the PSHE Association and is fully aligned with the DfE RSHE guidance. Several of the respondents felt that Y1 and Y2 is too early for pupils to be learning the terms 'penis' and 'vagina' while others thought that puberty should be taught only in secondary school. The Jigsaw scheme of work used across the Trust comes recommended by the PSHE Association and is fully aligned to the DfE RSHE guidance. Jigsaw has a gradual build up of content and knowledge and teaches 'the right things at the right time.' It is important to note that the updated guidance states that:

*'...whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic **before** girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.'*

It is also important that pupils learn the correct biological terms for reproductive parts as a safeguarding measure, enabling children to describe themselves accurately to healthcare professionals or trusted adults if needed. This approach of ensuring children have the correct language to name body parts is something promoted by the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and the government's own Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) statutory

safeguarding document. This content is not new and has been part of RSHE teaching for all schools in the Trust for many years now.

Regarding appropriateness of RSHE content for pupils with additional/special needs the DfE guidance makes it clear that this work is vital for these pupils:

'Schools should be aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues. RSHE can be particularly important for these pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.'

The guidance makes a clear point of saying that schools should ensure that this work is accessible to pupils who may have an additional/special educational need.

Several parents/carers thought that teaching children RSHE content should be left to parents and shouldn't be taught in schools. Concerns were also raised that certain topics might clash with 'culture and religion.'

The Trust fully respects that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children, particularly regarding personal values, culture, and religion. The RSHE curriculum is not intended to replace parental guidance, but to complement it by providing a safeguarding framework.

By teaching these topics in a structured, age-appropriate environment, we ensure all pupils have access to factual information that promotes safety, consent, and emotional wellbeing.

One respondent stated that sex education does not belong in primary school and should be taught only in secondary. The Trust's draft policy is clear that sex education is **not** taught at primary level. There is one lesson that is taught in Y6 which goes beyond the National Curriculum statutory requirements which is categorised as sex education. Parents/carers are able to withdraw their children from this.

In response to parents/carers who felt that not enough information was given, a full presentation was delivered at all Paradigm Trust schools where the updates to the RSHE guidance were explained in detail. A full collection of documents relating to the engagement process was available on the Trust website for the duration of the engagement process. Hard copies were also available on request at each school. Parents/carers were encouraged to participate in the engagement process and were offered several methods of responding including paper and electronic methods. Translators were also offered to those who requested.

The purpose of this process was not to look in depth at the curriculum but to engage on the new guidance and changes. It would not have been possible to go into detail on each year group's individual lesson content as part of these meetings. The RSHE content of Jigsaw contains over 150 lessons across all year groups. As has always been the case, information meetings are held in each year group which look in depth at that year's

content before it is taught. This is the best time to see all resources and lesson content that will be taught.

Several parents/carers didn't agree with what they saw as the Trust 'promoting same sex relationships.' The RSHE curriculum does not 'promote' any specific kind of relationship. While we acknowledge the diverse perspectives within our community, the Trust has a statutory duty to provide an inclusive education that reflects the reality of modern society. Under the Equality Act 2010, schools are required to foster good relations between different groups and must not discriminate against individuals based on protected characteristics, including sexual orientation. Our curriculum covers 'different families'- including those with same sex parents - not to promote a specific lifestyle, but to ensure that every child's family background is treated with equal dignity. By teaching children that families come in many forms, we fulfill our legal obligation to promote respect and prepare pupils for life in a diverse and pluralistic world.

In summary, the consultation indicates strong parental support for the updated RSHE policy and its focus on safeguarding and pupil well-being. The Trust will continue to work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure the curriculum remains transparent and effective and to improve engagement with parents/carers.

It is recommended that the Paradigm Trust board adopt the revised RSHE policy as it stands.