London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) Relationships and Health Education (RSE) in primary schools. LBTH advice to schools:

**The Department for Education (DfE) has released new Guidance for schools: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2019.**

**The London Borough of Tower Hamlets is committed to supporting schools to follow the DfE Guidance.  Following on from the DfE Guidance, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets has clarified its advice to schools.**

## 1. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) relationships:

LBTH recommends teaching about LGBT relationships, in the context of different types of families, in the statutory part of the curriculum in Key Stage 1. Different types of families may include a mum and a dad, single parent families, children raised by grandparents, same sex parents; all families should be respected equally. This is so that children coming from same sex families feel welcomed and included in school, from the very beginning of their school career, in Key Stage 1. It is also important in terms of tackling homophobic behaviour and bullying and demonstrates LBTH’s commitment to equalities, as outlined in the Equality Act.

## 2. Naming of the Sexual Body Parts

LBTH recommends that children are taught in Key Stage 1, in the statutory part of the curriculum, about naming of the sexual body parts as a safeguarding issue. This is so pupils can report abuse if it happens or so that they can accurately report medical symptoms if they are unwell. The more children are able to name these body parts and to know about appropriate and inappropriate touch, the more they are protected from abuse. The following words are recommended to be taught in Key Stage 1: penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, nipple/breast, and bottom/anus.

## 3. Puberty

LBTH also recommends that lessons about puberty begin in Year 4, to prepare all children for puberty and girls for the start of menstruation, before it occurs.

## 4. Do schools have to follow LBTH advice?

Schools do not need to follow their local authorities’ advice on these topics. It is ultimately the decision of each individual school’s governing body. The details of how the curriculum is taught and the resources used are entirely down to the school.

## 5. Which lessons can parents withdraw their children from in primary school?

* If schools are following the LBTH advice and teaching about the names of the sexual body parts and about LGBT relationships, in the context of same sex families, in the statutory part of the curriculum, in Key Stage 1, then there is no right of withdrawal from these lessons.
* Puberty is in the science curriculum and within Health Education so therefore statutory and has no right of withdrawal. LBTH advises schools to start teaching puberty in Year 4, before the onset of puberty.
* Conception and how a baby is born are advised by the Department for Education to be taught in Year 6, in the non-statutory part of the curriculum, with the right to withdraw pupils.