



# Year 4 Non-Statutory Sex Education

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## Parent curriculum overview

### Purpose of this document

This overview explains the Year 4 content that our school identifies as non-statutory sex education. It is written in our own words to give parents a clear picture of the knowledge and learning activities involved, rather than reproducing published scheme materials.

In primary schools, Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory, while schools may choose to provide additional sex education. Parents may request withdrawal from primary sex education that goes beyond National Curriculum science. Content that forms part of the National Curriculum for science is not subject to withdrawal.

### The two Year 4 lessons covered by this overview are:

- How are animals and people made?
- What cell is needed from a male and a female to make a baby?

**Important distinction** Some discussion of animal life cycles and reproduction consolidates statutory science learning. The specifically human conception content described below is the non-statutory sex education element.



## Lesson 1

### Lesson question

**How are animals and people made?**

### Learning objective

To understand that babies begin when a male seed and female egg join together.

#### WHAT PUPILS WILL LEARN

- Animals reproduce and produce offspring of the same kind.
- Different animals begin life in different ways; for example, some hatch from eggs while mammals usually develop inside the female before birth.
- Humans are mammals.
- A human baby begins when an egg cell and a sperm cell join.

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Generate and sort examples of animals, fish and birds, then identify the names of their young.
- Compare animals that hatch from eggs with mammals that give birth to live young, discussing familiar examples and exceptions pupils may know.
- Introduce the scientific idea that reproduction requires an egg and sperm, using a simple age-appropriate representation such as 'egg + sperm → beginning of a baby'.
- Use questioning to check and correct common misconceptions about where animal and human babies come from.

#### KEY VOCABULARY

**reproduction offspring mammal egg egg cell sperm sperm cell seed**



## Lesson 2

### Lesson question

**What cell is needed from a male and a female to make a baby?**

### Learning objective

To understand that babies begin when a male seed and female egg join together.

#### WHAT PUPILS WILL LEARN

- The human body is made from many different kinds of cells, each with a particular function.
- Egg cells are produced in female bodies and sperm cells are produced in male bodies.
- A baby can begin to develop when a sperm cell and an egg cell join and their genetic material combines.
- After conception, the developing baby grows inside the female body until it is ready to be born.
- Children's bodies do not produce mature sperm or release eggs; these reproductive changes are associated with puberty and later development.

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Recall different types of body cell and the jobs they perform, such as skin, muscle, bone and brain cells.
- Look at age-appropriate scientific images or diagrams of a human egg cell and sperm cell, noting that they can only be seen in detail using magnification.
- Explain simply what happens when an egg and sperm join, using accurate scientific language alongside familiar terms where helpful.
- Address common myths about where babies come from through a fictional scenario; pupils then explain the accurate scientific account in words or a simple labelled diagram.
- Use inclusive language such as 'male', 'female' and 'biological parents' where appropriate, recognising that families are formed in many different ways.

#### KEY VOCABULARY

**cell egg cell sperm cell conception reproduction biological parent female male puberty develop birth**



## Vocabulary across this part of the curriculum

The vocabulary below combines the words already identified in the school's curriculum with a small number of additional scientific terms that help parents see the language pupils may encounter.

| Already identified | Useful additional vocabulary |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Responsibilities   | Reproduction                 |
| Stable             | Offspring                    |
| Egg                | Mammal                       |
| Sperm              | Cell                         |
| Seed               | Egg cell                     |
| Secure             | Sperm cell                   |
| Stages             | Conception                   |
| Environment        | Biological parent            |
| Adolescent         | Male                         |
|                    | Female                       |
|                    | Puberty                      |
|                    | Birth                        |

**Vocabulary note:** For these two lessons specifically, the most important terms are egg/egg cell, sperm/sperm cell, cell, reproduction, mammal and conception. Words such as responsibilities, stable, secure, environment and adolescent appear to relate more widely to the surrounding human life-cycle/RSHE unit rather than being central to these two conception lessons.

### For parents

Parents who would like to discuss the content, see how it is taught, or request withdrawal from the non-statutory sex education element should contact the school. Any pupil withdrawn will be provided with appropriate alternative education during the relevant lesson.