

ADAPT THIS FOR YOUR OWN PRESENTATION

Training module

Teaching about **families and people who care for me** (primary), **families** (secondary)

Part of: Relationships education (primary)
Relationships and sex education (secondary)

[YOUR NAME, YOUR SCHOOL]

Primary

Secondary

December 2020

Teaching the new curriculum

Related topics

This module on **families** is closely related to the following topics:

- being safe
- respectful relationships
- caring friendships
- online relationships

Therefore, you should:

- **consider thematic links** across key topics and the whole school when planning and delivering lessons
- find ways to **link knowledge and vocabulary** across topics

Related guidance

Schools may also want to refer to the following related guidance when planning to teach this subject:

- [guidance for schools on preventing and responding to bullying \(including cyberbullying\)](#)
- [keeping children safe in education](#)

Primary curriculum

Introducing the family

Introducing the family

Schools will need to be sensitive to pupils' individual circumstances when planning lessons and teaching about the different ways in which families are important to children as they grow up.

Teachers should ensure:

- **descriptions of families are inclusive** of pupils' own experiences
- where needed, **individual pupils are supported** to identify their significant family members and wider support network (this may happen outside the classroom)

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.

Security, love and guidance

Explain that human beings have a family to:

- meet our basic **needs** (e.g. food, clothing, shelter)
- keep us **safe** (e.g. healthcare, teaching road safety)
- provide security and **stability**, including during times of change (e.g. starting a new school)

Families also provide love and guidance. They:

- give us a sense of **belonging and self-esteem** (e.g. spending time together, celebrating achievements)
- give us love and **emotional support** (e.g. when we are unhappy or worried about things)
- help us **learn new things** (e.g. discover our talents or show us how to behave in different situations)

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.

Support when we need it most

Teach that the **love and security** families provide can be particularly important when:

- things **change** in our lives (e.g. new siblings, loss of a family member, moving home)
- we have **problems or worries** (e.g. we are in trouble for something or someone has upset us)

Explain that children can themselves provide important love and support for other family members too, e.g. being patient and caring towards their parents or siblings.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.

Different types of family

Teach pupils that there are many types and sizes of families. For example:

- some children live with a parent or parents
- some children live with other family members such as grandparents or older siblings
- some children live with a foster family or in another type of home

Some people are the only child in their family while others have siblings.

Explain that **all types of families can provide the love and care** that children need.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know that others' families sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.

Respecting difference

Teach that every family is different.

It is important to **respect different kinds of families** and not expect other people's families to be the same as our own. For example, someone's family member might look, sound or behave differently from ours, or do a different job.

Explain that pupils have a right to expect people to treat their family with respect. If someone says something about our family that is hurtful or confusing we can speak to a teacher or parent/carer.

Related module: respectful relationships

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know that others' families sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.

Appreciating diversity

Teaching about families can provide an opportunity for pupils to **appreciate diversity** within their school and wider community.

For example, schools may want to build pupils' **awareness and understanding of disability** by selecting resources that feature children and other family members with a range of visible and invisible disabilities.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know that others' families sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.

Healthy family life

Healthy family life

Explain that healthy and caring family life includes:

- a **safe and encouraging** environment for children
- time spent together
- **respect and support** for each other, including in difficult times
- **dealing with problems** in a caring and supportive way

Explain that these things make a family feel safe and can help to shape how we relate to other people.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know the characteristics of healthy family life. Know that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.

Difficult times in families

Teach that many healthy families experience problems and disagreements. Explain that it is normal to be upset with family members occasionally.

Sometimes problems make people feel emotions such as unhappiness or anger, and it can help to:

- **communicate** how we feel
- **listen** to each other

Explain that if a child is worried about their emotions or mental wellbeing they can ask for help from a family member or another trusted adult.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know the characteristics of healthy family life. Know that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.

Feeling unhappy or unsafe

Unhappy or unsafe relationships

While most children will experience a happy and safe family life, schools should teach pupils to **recognise feelings of being unsafe** with or bad about another person, including a family member.

Explore with sensitivity, experiences that can make us feel unsafe, such as being:

- bullied or shouted at a lot with hurtful words
- physically attacked
- touched in a way that makes them uncomfortable
- asked to keep secrets that make them feel bad
- witness to harmful behaviour (e.g. alcoholism)

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

How to ask for help or advice

Teach that pupils can **ask a trusted adult** (e.g. a teacher or family member) if anyone, including someone in their family, makes them feel unsafe.

Teach that adults should listen to and take children's feelings and experiences seriously.

If a pupil feels they are not being heard, or they want to speak anonymously about anything they can call [Childline](https://www.childline.gov.uk) on 0800 1111.

Remind pupils of the people within the school that they can speak to if they need support.

Related module: being safe

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Marriage

Marriage

Teach that in England marriage is when 2 people make a legal commitment to be partners for life.

People choose to make this commitment for different reasons:

- for a sense of security, or wish to permanently join their life and build a family with a particular person
- to make a religious commitment as well as a legal one

With sensitivity to pupils' own experiences, explain that while marriage is intended to be lifelong, sometimes marriages end.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE

Know that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of 2 people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.

Good practice approaches (1)

Ensure information is taught at the right time so that pupils are not lacking the knowledge to make informed decisions in relationships with family members and other people outside of their family.

Embed the school's own policies on equality and behaviour, ensuring pupils and parents or carers are aware of the rules and consequences.

Teach pupils about the diversity of families, e.g. single parents, step-families and care scenarios. By the end of secondary school pupils should also have been taught LGBT content. This should be integrated into the teaching programme as relevant.

Good practice approaches (2)

Respond positively to children's descriptions of who is in their family. For example, some children may think of their pets or close friends of their parents or carers as being part of their family.

When teaching about the diversity of families, reflect that not all children will be biologically related to their family. Some may be adopted, in foster care, or in a children's home. Also consider that some families use surrogacy or IVF to have a child.

Consider the notion of kinship when talking about families. To some children, the concept of the extended family will be very important, and there will be opportunities to discuss people beyond parents or carers who have committed to providing a nurturing environment for children.

Good practice

Good practice approaches (3)

Bear in mind that some children may not recognise their family in descriptions of healthy family life. Stress that families care for each other in different ways and there are many ways for families to be happy together. Refer to your school's safeguarding procedures and other training modules such as 'being safe' if you are concerned about a child's situation at home.

Consult your school's designated teacher to decide how to manage any concerns relating to looked-after children.