# Revised Sex Education Guidance in England Sparks Concerns



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Schools in England are reportedly set to receive new guidelines on sex education, stipulating that the subject should not be taught to pupils younger than nine. Explicit discussions on topics such as contraception and sexually transmitted infections would be postponed until Year 9 under the revised guidance expected from Education Secretary Gillian Keegan.

The proposed changes have already sparked reactions from school leaders’ unions. Both the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) and the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) have raised concerns that imposing rigid age limits might result in children seeking information from less reliable sources outside of the classroom.

Paul Whiteman, NAHT's general secretary, criticized the lack of evidence supporting the new age limits, while ASCL's General Secretary Pepe Di’Iasio emphasized the need for flexibility, especially in cases where misinformation circulates on social media.

The forthcoming guidance also aims to limit proactive teaching about gender identity, focusing instead on biological facts. This approach has been supported by Policing Minister Chris Philp, who expressed his desire to protect children from being introduced to politically contested ideas too early.

The Department for Education has yet to release a formal consultation on the revised guidelines. Relationships and sex education have been mandatory in secondary schools since September 2020, with relationships education required in primary schools.

Parents and educators are seeking transparency in the new guidance to ensure it aligns with their values and expectations for young learners' well-being and development.

[Source: Evening Standard]