# Draft Revised Guidance on Sex Education in England Sparks Debate on Content Restrictions



**Draft Revised Guidance on Sex Education in England Set for Publication**

**London, October 2023** – Education Secretary Gillian Keegan revealed that her teenage experience of sex education was intensely awkward, recounting an incident where a boy fainted during a lesson. Keegan attended St Augustine of Canterbury Secondary School in Huyton, Merseyside, and described the lessons for 14- and 15-year-olds as poorly conducted.

The Department for Education (DfE) is set to release draft revised guidance on relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) in England. The new guidelines emphasize that sex education should not be taught to children under the age of nine. This marks a significant policy shift amidst concerns over what is deemed “inappropriate” content for young students.

The guidance, open for a nine-week consultation, proposes introducing age ratings for RSHE content and advises against teaching gender identity concepts. It also includes sections on sexual harassment and violence, with educational content on stalking and the influence of misogynistic online personalities.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak stated that the revised guidance aims to protect children from disturbing content while supporting teachers and giving parents access to curriculum content. Sunak initiated a review of statutory RSHE guidance in March 2022 after receiving reports of children being exposed to unsuitable material.

The consultation will assess the impact of these proposed age limits and content restrictions. Education professionals and charities have expressed concerns that such restrictions may drive children to seek information from unreliable online sources. The revised guidance intends to ensure parents have the right to see all RSHE resources used in schools.

The draft guidance will remain under consultation before any statutory changes are implemented.