

RSE & PSHE

Vocabulary progression

Introduction to key vocabulary

This document outlines the vocabulary progression within Kapow's RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) and PSHE (Personal, social, health and economic education) curriculum.

It does not include **all** vocabulary that pupils encounter in their RSE & PSHE lessons but instead focuses on the essential words and terms crucial for understanding the subject. These words are carefully selected to help pupils grasp important concepts and ideas outlined in the Kapow Primary RSE & PSHE curriculum.

The vocabulary is categorised under the key areas: **My healthy self, Connecting with others, The online world, Health protection, Growing up and Staying safe.**

The aim in consolidating these keywords is to enable teachers to focus their teaching on the vocabulary outlined for each year group, ensuring a strong understanding of what words pupils should already be familiar with and those they will encounter in future years.

What we call 'knowledge' is language, and this fact proves that to understand any subject, we first need to understand its language.

Alex Quigley, Closing the Vocabulary Gap

Receptive vs expressive vocabulary



Receptive vocabulary

The words a person understands when they hear or read them. Vocabulary that an individual can recognise and comprehend even if they do not actively use it in conversation or writing.



Expressive vocabulary

The words that a person can actively use in speech or writing to communicate.

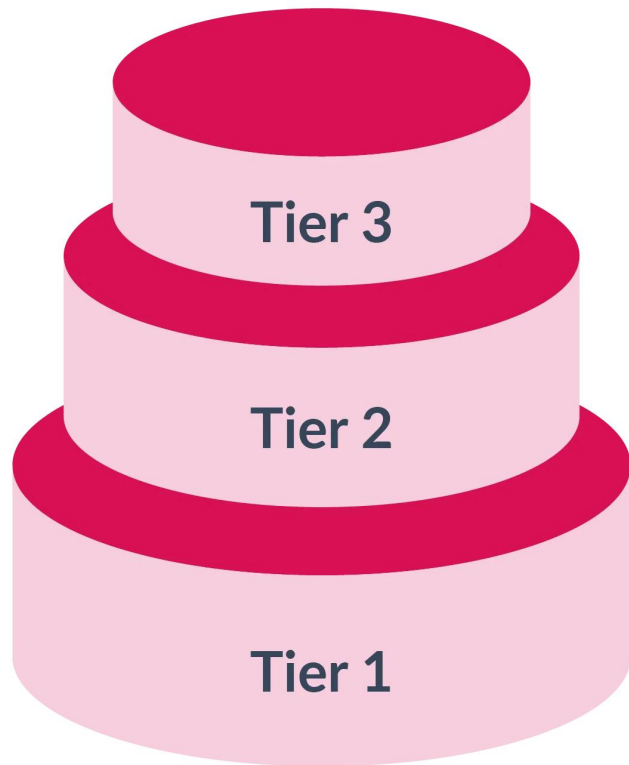
Some vocabulary will be used in lessons earlier than indicated in this document; this is done intentionally. Pupils often understand vocabulary receptively *before* they can confidently use it expressively. Our lesson plans guide teachers to model new vocabulary before the vocabulary is explicitly taught and before pupils are expected to use it to communicate ideas themselves.

The year groups listed represent when pupils are expected to retain the vocabulary and its meanings, and begin to actively use the words in appropriate contexts. We have chosen to focus on when vocabulary is used expressively, as this makes it easier for teachers to assess.

However, active use of new vocabulary does not necessarily imply complete mastery of each word or concept, as understanding continues to evolve and deepen over time.

Choosing words to teach

In selecting the words to include in this vocabulary progression, we have used the 'Three-tiers framework' (Beck, McKeown & Omanson, 1987) which advises focusing instruction on Tier 2 vocabulary for the most productive gains. Tier 1 words have not been included in the progression, unless they acquire a more specialised meaning (and would therefore be classed as Tier 2 or Tier 3 words) in the context of RSE and PSHE. For example, words like 'relationship,' 'private' and 'respect' might be familiar to children in general contexts but have been included in our progression because it is important for children to understand their specific meanings in the context of relationships, health and personal development.



Tier 3 vocabulary

These words are used infrequently in conversation and often their use is subject-specific. Textbook glossaries usually focus on Tier 3 words as they can tend to be abstract in nature. They require explicit teaching and contextualisation.

Tier 2 vocabulary

These words are of high-utility as they are words which appear across the school curriculum and in written texts. Often explicit teaching of Tier 2 words is not planned for but this can be the most productive place to focus vocabulary instruction.

Tier 1 vocabulary

The most basic words. These are the words that typically appear in conversation, meaning children are exposed to them often from a very early age. They rarely require explicit teaching because they are already familiar to the majority of children.

Key area vocabulary progression

	Key stage 1		Lower key stage 2		Upper key stage 2	
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
My healthy self	anger body clues* disgust emotions face clues fear feelings happiness relax sadness surprise trust* trusted adult*	active exercise five-a-day healthy habits	health mental health mind mood negative (feelings) physical health positive (feelings) respect* routine support trust team	balanced diet fixed mindset growth mindset hydrated/dehydrated hygiene mindset nutrients resilience	cope light (activity) moderate (activity) regulate response vigorous (activity) wellbeing	calories (tooth) decay dental hygiene flossing long-term persistence setback short-term
Connecting with others	fair/ unfair friendly lonely polite* safe * share strengths trust* trusted adult*	belong bullying calm carer family	behaviour falling out friendship relationship respect* self-respect	assertive compromise disrespect manners	civil partnership commitment conflict influence* marriage	bystander discrimination empathy self-esteem stereotypes upstander

Please note

As the scheme continues to be developed, there may well be changes to this document.

*This word appears across more than one key area.

Key area vocabulary progression

	Key stage 1		Lower key stage 2		Upper key stage 2	
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
The online world	online polite* safe* screen time trusted adult*	permission* personal information private information sharing	anonymous block communicate report respect* respectful screenshot	content in/accurate mislead reliable search result	advert influence* scam targeted	coming soon!
Citizenship	Coming soon!					

Please note

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*This word appears across more than one key area.

Key area vocabulary progression

	Key stage 1		Lower key stage 2	Upper key stage 2
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 4	Year 6
Staying safe	999 body clues* comfortable danger emergency* harm road safety rule safe* trusted adult* uncomfortable unsafe	penis* permission* private parts* testicles* vagina* vulva*	alcohol boundaries* cigarettes current hazard illegal inappropriate legal operator personal space pressure risk road crossing tide vapes	addictive air ambulance cautious coastguard consent* criminal offence drugs emergency services emotional mountain rescue peer pressure physical public transport search-and -rescue substance threat violence

Please note

As the scheme continues to be developed, there may well be changes to this document.

*This word appears across more than one key area.
 NB: The Staying safe key area is not taught in Year 3 and Year 5.

Key area vocabulary progression

	Key stage 1	Lower key stage 2
	Year 1	Year 3
Health protection	999 dentist doctor emergency* first aid germs illness injury medicine prevent protect serious spread unwell urgent	allergy asthma defence disease immune infection pressure spf sunburn sunstroke symptom vaccine

	Upper key stage 2
	Year 6
First aid (optional)	Coming October 2026!

Please note

As the scheme continues to be developed, there may well be changes to this document.

*This word appears across more than one key area.

NB: The Health protection key area is not taught in Year 4, Year 5 or Year 6.

The optional Year 6 First aid unit is shown on this page because, if you decide to teach it, it builds on the learning in the Health protection units.

Key area vocabulary progression

	Key stage 1	Lower key stage 2	Upper key stage 2
	Year 2	Year 4	Year 5
Growing up	change grow nipples penis* private parts* scrotum testicles* vagina* vulva*	boundaries* breasts period physical changes puberty	egg erection genitals hormones influence* menstrual cup period pad period pants self-conscious sensitive tampon wet dreams womb/uterus

	Upper key stage 2
	Year 6
Sex education (optional)	conception consent* ovary pregnant sexual intercourse sperm

Please note

As the scheme continues to be developed, there may well be changes to this document.

*This word appears across more than one key area.

NB: The Growing up key area is not taught in Year 1, Year 3 or Year 6.

The optional Year 6 Sex education unit is shown on this page because, if you decide to teach it, it builds on the learning in the Growing up units.

Grammar notes

The vocabulary list includes words in various forms, as these are the versions most frequently used in our RSE and PSHE lessons. For example, we might list 'privacy' because it is commonly used in discussions. However, as pupils grow more confident with these specific forms, it is beneficial to teach them how to adapt and use all related forms of the word. For instance, from the root 'private,' they should learn to use 'privacy,' 'privately' and 'private' with confidence. This approach ensures that pupils not only recognise these words but can also apply them accurately in different contexts.

References

Quigley, A., *Minding the Vocabulary Gap*, (Routledge, 2017), p. 95.

Beck, I., McKeown, M., & Kucan, L., *Bringing Words to Life*, (Guilford Press, 2013), p. 9.

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