

Uncovering RSE and Exposing Harms

"Can lists make your sex life better?" Site recommended by DfE for children!

The Department for Education (DfE), in its latest [statutory guidance on RSE](#),¹ recommends a number of resources. One such online resource for secondary schools is Sexwise,² where a platform is given to a piece called, *Can lists make your sex life better?*³

Website: <https://www.sexwise.org.uk/blog/can-lists-make-your-sex-life-better>

Aims: "We're here to give you honest advice about contraception, pregnancy, STIs and pleasure."⁴

Age/Audience: The statutory guidance presents this website resource under "Relationships and Sex Education", so secondary schools are intentionally included. The DfE treats this website as being for "teachers [who] may find [this] helpful for their knowledge".⁵ Regardless of whether children are shown the article directly or not, the teachers are encouraged to use the site. This means children will almost certainly be shown the website generally or parts of it. In any event, where children are signposted to resources such as this site, this sends a message of validation and approval.

Production: Sexwise is run by the Family Planning Association.⁶

Year of Publication: 2018 (July 16th).

Main concerns & highlights: young people are urged to think of all the sex acts they can imagine; there are references to kink, sex toys, dominance, submission and strap-on porn. There are four tips provided (quoted in bold):

- 1. You create a list with all of the sex acts you can think of (the link above contains a pretty good one if you're having a bit of a mental block or there is this one which is very comprehensive).**
- 2. You send the list to your partner.**
- 3. You separately (and that is important) write by each act a yes, a maybe or a no.**
- 4. Collate your results and let the sex begin!**

And finally, you get to share your research! Maybe you read a really hot bit of erotica while looking up Dominance and Submission. Maybe you saw some awesome strap-on porn or just found some cool looking sex toys you'd like to use. Remember, sharing is

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caring and showing your partner you looked into the stuff they ticked as a yes is one hell of a turn on.

Statutory Guidance contradicts itself

In the same statutory guidance in which this website resource appears, the DfE states that “effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation”.⁷

The current Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Regulations states that pupils are to learn about “the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children”. Encouraging children to imagine all the sex acts they can think of, with references to kink, sex toys, dominance, submission and strap-on porn in no way complies with the definition of lawful RSE, in line with the Regulations and DfE Guidance.

References

¹ See: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, Annex B, Suggested resources, Teaching resources, p.46.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

² <https://www.sexwise.org.uk>

³ <https://www.sexwise.org.uk/blog/can-lists-make-your-sex-life-better> (Accessed 21 September 2020).

⁴ <https://www.sexwise.org.uk> (home page)

⁵ Annex B Suggested resources, Teaching resources, p.46.

⁶ <https://www.sexwise.org.uk/about-us>

⁷ See para. 70, p. 24, See section 8, 80A, 2, a (i), The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019. It states that pupils are to learn about “the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children”.