

Steps 4 Life PSHE - what's changing for 2026

A quick guide for teachers, covering both the updated Physical Health & Mental Wellbeing (PHMW) and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) profiles.

The Steps 4 Life PSHE content has been updated to match the Department for Education's updated Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance, which schools must teach from September 2026. This is a genuine update, not just a tidy-up - but a good amount of what you already use day to day hasn't changed at all.

What's new

- **Personal Safety is a brand-new topic** in the PHMW profile — hazard awareness, assessing risk, peer pressure, and, at the older levels, weapons awareness and exploitation. There's nothing to compare it against; it's simply new.
- **New content on things that weren't really on the radar last time round:** vaping, gambling and gambling-like game mechanics, AI (deepfakes, chatbots, AI-generated images), online financial scams, and digital wellbeing more broadly.
- **A stronger focus on safeguarding in the RSE profile** — consent, sexual harassment, forced marriage and FGM all get more explicit, age-appropriate coverage than before, building up gradually from the earlier levels.
- **A few topics have been renamed** to match the government's own headings — for example "Online & Media" is now "Online Safety & Awareness", and "Changing Adolescent Body" is now "Developing Bodies". Same content family, new name.

What's stayed the same

- **The level structure hasn't changed** — Step 1 through Level 2 works exactly as it did before, so there's nothing new to learn about how the framework itself is organised.
- **A large share of individual statements are word-for-word unchanged** — more so in PHMW than RSE. If a statement hasn't changed, any assessment record you already hold against it is still perfectly valid; there's no need to reassess.

What to look out for

- **Some strands have had a heavier rewrite than others.** Being Safe, Online Safety & Awareness and Physical Health & Fitness have all seen substantial change - worth a proper look before you next teach or assess those. Basic First Aid, Developing Bodies and Families have changed the least.
- **A statement may look familiar but use different wording.** Where the underlying skill is the same, but the wording has been sharpened or extended, treat it as a fresh statement for assessment purposes, even if the idea is one you already teach.
- **Some statements now combine what used to be two separate ones.** If a statement you used to tick off individually seems to have disappeared, check the neighbouring statements at the same level - it's very likely been folded into one of them rather than dropped.

Questions or feedback

If anything reads oddly, seems pitched at the wrong level for a learner, or just doesn't look right, please flag it to tor@bsquared.co.uk — this is a living document and any feedback from the classroom feeds into the next update.



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