RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION INCLUDING SEX EDUCATION POLICY (CURRICULUM)

Reviewer: Subject Leader

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Introduction

Whitegrove Primary School considers that Relationships Education, including Sex Education (RSE) is an integral part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship curriculum, and it is also linked to the Science, RE, PE and Computing curriculums. We aim to offer pupils a carefully planned programme on human development, relationships, sexuality and family life within a safe, comfortable atmosphere with a relaxed relationship between teacher and pupil. The programme is set within a moral framework and matched to the pupils' level of maturity.

This policy reflects the requirements of the Department for Education's 2025 statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE), which becomes mandatory from 1 September 2026 and details what pupils should know by the end of primary school.

This Relationships Education policy has been produced through consultation with school governors and the school community. We view RSE as lifelong learning about physical, moral, social, cultural and emotional development. It involves learning about the importance of loving and caring relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. It is teaching children about their body, safe and unsafe touch, and the physical and emotional changes of puberty. RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

Intent

It is our intention that all children have the opportunity to experience a programme of RSHE at a level which is appropriate for their age, maturity and physical development, with differentiated provision if required.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive Relationship and Sex Education does not make young people more likely to become sexually active at a younger age.

We ensure RSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our pupils regardless of language spoken, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, culture, disability, sexuality and special educational needs (SEND). We ensure RSHE fosters equality for all who have a protected characteristic.

Our RSE programme is an important part of the work of the school in preparing children for their teenage years and adult life. There is a National Curriculum requirement in Science to teach that animals, including humans, reproduce and to introduce the human life cycle. Similarly, the National Curriculum requires an exploration of Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship issues concerning relationships. Additional aspects of relationships are embedded within the National Curriculum requirements for Computing and Religious Education.

Further details may be found in the latest National Curriculum documents available at school and online.

Aims

- To provide accurate, age-appropriate information in a safe and supportive environment
- To have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others
- To understand about the range of relationships, including the importance of family for the care and support of children
- To promote equality, inclusion, and respect for all families and individuals
- To develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships
- To be able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work
- To prepare children for the physical and emotional changes of puberty
- To understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships
- To be able to recognise, reduce and report risks, including online dangers
- To be able to recognise unsafe situations and be able to protect themselves and ask for help and support
- To understand the role the media plays in forming attitudes
- To understand how safe routines can reduce the spread of bacteria and viruses

We aim to provide clear and accurate information appropriate to the age of the children. Ideally the education offered at school should complement that given by the parents in the home environment.

Implementation

Most aspects of Relationship Education will occur during specialist PSHE lessons and lessons in linked areas of the curriculum such as Science, although some issues may be encountered outside these lessons and dealt with by teachers appropriately as they occur. Class teachers are responsible for implementing the RSE curriculum under guidance from the PHSE lead. Relationships Education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe

Some biological aspects of RSE are taught within the Science curriculum. Some relationship aspects are taught within the Computing curriculum, and others are linked with R.E. where children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved.

Pupils in upper KS2 also receive stand-alone Sex Education sessions.

Right of Withdrawal

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education, as stated in the statutory guidance, at the DfE and at Whitegrove we believe the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship and safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught. Planning for Relationships Education takes into account the views of parents and pupils and is monitored to ensure that it is appropriate and beneficial for all learners.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education, where this goes beyond the requirements of the Science curriculum. These requests must be granted, however the Headteacher will discuss the request with parents to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The Headteacher will discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This might include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher. Some of these detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead.

Planning and Teaching Methods

RSE is taught in a safe and supportive environment where pupils feel comfortable to ask questions. Teachers and support staff use clear, factual language and establish group rules with pupils to create a respectful learning environment.

We teach RSE through discrete lessons and a combination of other subject areas (e.g. Science, PE, Computing and R.E.). Since RSE incorporates the development of self-esteem and relationships, pupils' learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum but through all aspects of school life including on the playground. It is important that all staff understand they have a responsibility to implement this policy and promote the aims of the school at any time they are dealing with children.

Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. At Whitegrove difficult questions are considered on an individual basis. All questions are handled with sensitivity and, where appropriate, confidentiality. Teachers use a range of age-appropriate responses which might include one-to-one or small group discussions, directing to relevant sources of information and/or discussing with parents.

SEND

We ensure that RSE is accessible to all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Lessons are adapted to meet individual learning needs, using simplified language, visual aids and practical activities. Where necessary, pupils will receive targeted support in line with their individual education plans (IEPs) or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Collaboration with the SENCo, support staff and parents will ensure that resources and teaching approaches are appropriately matched to pupils' needs, enabling every child to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to make safe and informed choices in their personal, social and emotional development.

Progression

EYFS

Through PSED, the children learn to lead healthy and happy lives. We foster strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults, enabling children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children are supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self and to set themselves simple goals. They learn to have confidence in their own abilities, develop confidence to speak in a familiar group and to say when they do or don't need help. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. They learn about the concept of male and female and about young animals. Through supported interaction with other children, they

learn how to make good friendships, co-operate, take turns and resolve conflicts peaceably. Through age appropriate discussions and activities, they learn about consent.

Key Stage 1

Children reflect on family relationships, different types of family groups including those that may be different to their own, friendship and managing hurtful behaviour and bullying, and the effects of healthy relationships on physical and mental wellbeing. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved. They also learn about parts of the human body including naming external genitalia, safe and unsafe touch and personal safety (including consent). Children learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and personal hygiene to maintain good health. They build on their ability to co-operate with others in work and play and recognise the range of human emotions and ways to deal with them.

Through work in Science, children learn about life cycles of some animals; understand the idea of growing from young to old; and learn that all living things reproduce. In Computing, they learn about privacy, staying safe online, personal boundaries and that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.

To begin to understand that change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently. To understand where and how they can seek support for their own, or someone else's wellbeing.

Key Stage 2

We believe that all children need to learn about puberty, before the onset. We aim to discuss the whole subject openly and without embarrassment or anxiety. Children are taught about the physical, emotional and social changes at puberty, including personal hygiene.

Children are taught about consent and boundaries. They learn how to recognise and respond appropriately to pressure from others that makes them feel worried or uncomfortable and to get advice, report concerns and support others who experience unwanted or unacceptable physical contact (including FGM). They will consider how to make simple choices and exercise some basic techniques for resisting pressures.

Children continue to develop an understanding of relationships within a family, between friends and in the community. They learn to recognise and respect different types of family structure, including single parents, same-sex parents, step-parents, blended families and foster parents; and learn that families of all types can give family members love, security and stability.

Children develop skills needed to form relationships and to respect other people's emotions, feelings and boundaries. In upper KS2 they learn that people may be attracted to someone emotionally, romantically and sexually; that people may be attracted to someone of the same sex or different sex to them; that gender identity and sexual orientation are different.

In Science, children build on their knowledge of life cycles and learn about the basic biology of human reproduction including birth of a baby. To continue their understanding that change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently. To understand where and how they can seek support for their own, or someone else's wellbeing.

In Computing, children learn about privacy, staying safe on-line, personal boundaries and that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. Include something about peer pressure to send images online??

The class teachers deliver a detailed Sex Education Programme in upper KS2 using a range of teaching methods. These include whole class teaching, small group teacher led discussions, approved videos and case studies. Sessions are usually delivered in mixed gender groups however there may be occasions where single gender groups are more appropriate and relevant. Parents will be notified prior to these lessons and have the opportunity to view the materials used in school. This content has been agreed in consultation with governors, parents and teaching staff.

Safeguarding / Confidentiality

Teachers need to be aware that effective Relationships Education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

Legally, the school cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality if concerns exist. We aim to ensure that pupils' best interests are maintained and try to encourage pupils to talk to their parents or carers to provide support. If confidentiality has to be broken, then pupils are informed first and then supported by the designated teacher throughout the whole process. The staff member will inform the Head Teacher /Designated Safe Guarding Lead in line with the LA procedures for child protection.

Impact

The teaching of RSE will be monitored and assessed through the scrutiny of planning, children's attitudes and wellbeing, children's work and consultation with class teachers. Teachers gauge children's progress against Age Related Expectations, the DfE statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education and the National Curriculum. We have clear expectations of what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do at the end of each year.

Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through reviewing and revisiting content and evaluating children's responses during lessons. Pupils will have opportunities to review, discuss and reflect on their learning during lessons and through open channels of communications between pupils and staff, pupils and pupils and pupils and parents. We ensure opportunities are given for continued, and where appropriate, confidential communications and on-going sharing of open and honest questions, concerns and observations.

Class teachers reflect the achievements of pupils in RSE to parents each year in their annual report.

Review

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy and may be consulted by parents on any aspects that cause concern or require clarification. The Governing Body is responsible for the content of this policy and will review it annually or as appropriate.

Role of the RSE Leader

- Supporting and working with colleagues and keeping them informed of changes and developments within their subject.
- Monitoring the relevance, continuity and progression of the RSE, PSHE and Citizenship curriculum throughout the school and recommending any action needed.
- Providing advice about the RSE, PSHE and Citizenship guidelines and schemes of work.

- Keeping, updating and extending resources, ensuring staff are aware of their availability and identifying future needs.
- Keeping own skills and knowledge up to date through reading and attending relevant courses and by developing links with sources of expertise and information beyond the school.

Links with other policies and guidelines

This policy is linked with the following Whitegrove policies and guidelines:

- PSHE and Citizenship
- Science
- Computing and SMART guidelines
- Religious Education
- Equal Opportunities
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Confidentiality

It is also linked with:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers 2020