



GOREFIELD PRIMARY ACADEMY

Personal, Social and Health Education,
including Relationships and Sex
Education, Policy

November 2024

Introduction

At Gorefield Primary Academy, we understand that pupils must be provided with an education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences needed for a happy and successful adult life. A key part of this relates to relationships education, which must be delivered to every primary-aged pupil. Primary schools also have the option to decide whether pupils are taught sex education. State funded primary schools are also required to teach health education.

Relationships Education focuses on giving pupils the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy. Health Education focuses on equipping pupils with the knowledge they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.

We understand our responsibility to deliver a high-quality, age-appropriate relationships, sex and health curriculum for all pupils. This policy sets out the framework for our relationships, sex and health curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered.

Within the policy, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education will be referred to as RSHE.

Legal context

The law was changed with effect from September 2020 so that primary schools in England must teach relationships education and health education (The Children and Social Work Act 2017).

- The relationships education part of the new curriculum teaches what children need to learn to build positive and safe relationships with family and friends and online.
- The health education part of the new curriculum covers both physical health and mental wellbeing and teaches children how to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing; how to recognise issues in themselves and in others; and how to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.

Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools, but:

- The new curriculum for relationships education and health education does include content on puberty.
- The national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts; the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty); and reproduction in some plants and animals.

Following this change in the law, the Department for Education published Statutory Guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019). This guidance requires primary schools in England to have a written relationships education policy to cover the following:

- How relationships education is delivered
- What sex education (if any) a school chooses to cover that goes beyond the national curriculum for science and relationships education.

There is no equivalent requirement for a health education policy but, in line with best practice, this RSE policy also covers health education.

This policy also supports legal requirements relating to, but not limited to, the following:

- The Equality Act 2010.
- Section 80A of the Education Act 2002
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- Statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

The following policies are also relevant to this Relationships and Health Education policy:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Definition

RSHE supports children and young people's personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Its aims are to help children and young people to deal with the real-life issues they face as they grow up and that they will encounter as adults. Their learning will support them both online and offline, to make informed choices about their safety, physical and mental health, enabling them to live positive and fulfilled lives.

RSHE is enhanced by a supportive school ethos where everyone is valued, positive relationships are promoted and there is a safe learning environment.

Following guidance from the DfE, we define Sex Education as learning about 'how a (human) baby is conceived and born'.

This extends the learning about sexual reproduction in 'some plants and animals' required through the Science national curriculum. It also complements the statutory requirement to teach about puberty as part of Science and Health Education, as understanding sexual reproduction in humans enables children to understand the processes of puberty.

Aims

The aims of our RSHE programme are:

- To provide accurate and age-appropriate information for all pupils.
- To include all children.
- To help our pupils to make informed choices by providing them with the key information and resources to do so.
- To develop knowledge, skills and positive attitudes.
- To build confidence and self-esteem.
- To develop personal attributes.
- To prepare all children for the next stage of education and adulthood.
- To develop positive and inclusive attitudes to everyone, particularly to those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Roles and responsibilities

An effective programme of RSHE requires support from the whole school community and the following people have specific roles and responsibilities:

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the curriculum is well-led, effectively managed and well-planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring teaching is delivered to ensure it is accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Providing clear information for parents on subject content and their rights to request that their children are withdrawn.
- Making sure that subjects are appropriately resourced, staffed and timetabled to ensure that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overseeing the development and delivery of the RSHE curriculum.
- Providing staff with the opportunity to contribute to the development of RSHE.
- Ensuring staff have appropriate training and knowledge to deliver the curriculum effectively.
- Providing information to the governing body on the effectiveness of the curriculum and this policy.
- Supporting the subject leader and staff, as required.
- Discussing requests for withdrawals with parents and carers.
- Organising alternative education for pupils, where necessary, that is appropriate and purposeful.

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Leading the development and delivery of an effective RSHE curriculum.
- Overseeing and monitoring the delivery of the subjects.
- Keeping up to date with the development of RSHE.
- Ensuring the curriculum taught is age-appropriate and high-quality.
- Supporting colleagues as required.

- Liaising with parents and carers, where necessary.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support the delivery of the curriculum.
- Keeping subject information up to date, including on the school website.
- Overseeing external visitors and resources used in RSHE.

The appropriate teachers are responsible for:

- Delivering a high-quality and age-appropriate relationships, sex and health curriculum in line with statutory requirements.
- Understanding and implementing the policy of RSHE.
- Teaching RSHE in line with the planned curriculum.
- Using a variety of teaching methods and resources to provide an engaging curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.
- Creating an environment where pupils feel safe to talk, ask questions and share their views.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the curriculum.
- Modelling positive attitudes to relationships, sex and health education.
- Responding to any safeguarding concerns in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Working closely with the SENDCO to identify and respond to the individual needs of pupils with SEND.
- Working with the subject leader to regularly review, evaluate and develop the RSHE curriculum we deliver.

Curriculum organisation

The school adopts the following approaches to organise the curriculum to ensure high quality delivery of relationships and sex education, and health education:

- RSHE is covered as part of a wider programme of PSHE education.
- The relationships and health curriculum has been organised in line with the statutory requirements outlined in the DfE (2019) 'Relationships, Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance.
- We are dedicated to ensuring that our curriculum meets the needs of the whole school community; therefore, the curriculum is informed by issues in the school and wider community to ensure it is tailored to our pupils' needs.
- Our RSHE lessons range from 20-60 minutes long, allowing children to explore topics in depth and reflect on their learning.
- External visitors and focus days will be planned to support and enhance the delivery of the RSHE curriculum.
- Opportunities to draw links between relationships, sex and health education and other curriculum subjects are planned wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning. For example:
 - **Science** – pupils learn about the main external parts of the body and changes to the body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty.
 - **Computing** – pupils learn about e-Safety, including how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely; how to keep personal information private and how to access help and support if needed.

- **PE** – pupils explore various physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and understand how exercise can lead to healthier lifestyles.
- **Citizenship** – pupils learn about the requirements of the law, their responsibilities and the possible consequences of their actions.
- **PSHE** – pupils learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.
- **Food Technology** – pupils learn how to plan, prepare and cook healthy snacks and meals as part of a healthy and balanced diet.
- Lessons will be delivered by class teachers and/or HLTAs, including the wellbeing lead, that are familiar with the class involved. Sensitive and controversial topics that require further deeper discussion will be led by the class teacher. Some external visitors or specialist staff may be invited in to deliver some topics.

Teaching and learning

RSHE is delivered in line with the teaching and learning policy. However, as the subject deals with real-life experiences, it is important to establish a safe and positive learning environment using the following approaches:

- Establishing clear ground rules in consultation with the children. These ground rules should include confidentiality, respect for others, privacy and boundaries.
- Using distancing techniques including de-personalised discussions and role-play.
- Using clear, simple language to avoid misunderstandings.
- Avoiding prejudice and assumptions about children's abilities, desires, background and experiences.
- Dealing sensitively and appropriately with unexpected questions and comments.
- Assessing and building on existing knowledge and experiences.
- Ensuring that learning is engaging, high-quality, using a range of activities, including structured discussion and problem-solving.
- Providing a range of opportunities to learn, practise and demonstrate knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Allowing time for reflection.
- Providing differentiated learning, where appropriate.
- Using a variety of groupings to enhance learning.

Curriculum content

Long term planning:

The school has chosen to use the Cambridgeshire PSHE Service units of work, which provide full curriculum coverage, including all the statutory content, for each year group. We also refer to information from the PSHE Association to ensure the information we provide for our pupils is high-quality, appropriate for the age and maturity of the pupils, and sensitive to their needs.

The lessons are divided up into overarching themes:

- Citizenship
- Healthy & Safer Lifestyles
- Myself and My Relationships

- and
- Economic Well-Being

The curriculum is planned to ensure that pupils revisit these key areas from Early Years Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stage 1 and 2, each time covering it in greater depth and with increased maturity. Upon returning to each area, prior knowledge is utilised so pupils can build on previous foundations, rather than starting again.

Our focus is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults.

By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

Families and people who care for me	• Families are important for them growing up because they can give love, security and stability. • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
Caring friendships	• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties. • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • That most friendships have ups and downs, but that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust.

	• How to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable. • How to manage conflict. • How to manage different situations and how to seek help from others if needed.
Respectful relationships	• The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs. • Which practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • The conventions of courtesy and manners. • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. • That in school and wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority. • About the different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying to an adult, and how to seek help. • What a stereotype is, and how they can be unfair, negative or destructive. • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.
Online relationships	• That people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone they are not. • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online, even when we are anonymous. • The rules and principles for keeping safe online. • How to recognise harmful content and contact online, and how to report these. • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information. • The risks associated with people they have never met. • How information and data is shared and used online.
Being safe	• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others – including in a digital context. • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults. • That it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.

	• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter, including online, who they do not know. • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. • How to ask for advice or help for themselves and others, and to keep trying until they are heard. • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. • Where to seek advice, for example, from their family, their school and other sources.
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The focus for physical health and mental wellbeing should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Teachers should be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.

By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

Mental wellbeing	• That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health. • That there is a normal range of emotions, e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and nervousness. • The scale of emotions that humans experience in response to different experiences and situations. • How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings. • How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving are appropriate and proportionate. • The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, and voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness. • Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, and the benefits of hobbies and interests. • How isolation and loneliness can affect children, and that it is very important they seek support and discuss their feelings with an adult. • That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing. • Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), extending to who in school they should speak to if they are worried about themselves or others. • That it is common to experience mental ill health and, for the many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.
Internet safety and harms	• That for most people, the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.

	• About the benefits of rationing time spent online. • The risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices. • The impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing. • How to consider the effect of their online actions on others. • How to recognise and display respectful behaviour online. • The importance of keeping personal information private. • Why some social media, some computer games and online gaming are age-restricted. • That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health. • How to be a discerning consumer of information online, including understanding that information, inclusive of that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted. • Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.
Physical health and fitness	• The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle. • The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this, for example by walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile, or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise. • The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity. • How and when to seek support, including which adults to speak to in school, if they are worried about their health.
Healthy eating	• What constitutes a healthy diet, including an understanding of calories and other nutritional content. • The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals. • The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating, including obesity, and other behaviours, e.g. the impact of alcohol on health.
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	• The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.
Health and prevention	• How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss or unexplained changes to the body. • About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. • The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. • About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene

	and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. • About personal hygiene and germs, including bacteria and viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of hand washing. • The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
Basic first aid	• How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary. • Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.
Changing adolescent body	• Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes. • About menstrual wellbeing and key facts relating to the menstrual cycle.

Resources

There are a lot of excellent resources available to support the delivery of the curriculum. Teachers will select any additional resources carefully, and the subject leader will oversee the selection.

Additional resources will be:

- Up-to-date.
- Relevant to children.
- Consistent with the aims and values of the school.

Examples of resources are available to share with parents as reassurance which enables them to continue conversations at home.

Visitors

Visitors can enhance children's learning. Teachers will select visitors in liaison with the subject leader. The following will be used to guide the use of visitors:

- To enhance the lessons delivered by the class teacher, providing the visitor with relevant information on where a visitor fits into the long-term plan.
- Check the content of sessions delivered by visitors to make sure that it fits with our school's ethos and meets legal requirements.
- A member of school staff will be present in sessions delivered by visitors.

Equality

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school is under a legal duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between those with protected characteristics and those without. The protected characteristics are:

- Age

- Marriage and Civil partnership
- Disability
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Sex
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Gender reassignment.

In addition, the school must consider the needs of those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Teachers, with support from the SENDCO, will tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages.

The RSHE programme will meet the needs of all children. Lessons will include content that will tackle discrimination and foster good relationships.

Right to withdraw from sex education

A parent or carer cannot legally withdraw their child from any aspect of the statutory relationships education or health education, as they are statutory in primary schools.

As sex education is not statutory at primary level, other than what must be taught as part of the science curriculum, a parent or carer does have the right to request to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education curriculum.

Following guidance from the DfE, we define Sex Education as learning about 'how a (human) baby is conceived and born'.

This extends the learning about sexual reproduction in 'some plants and animals' required through the Science national curriculum. It also complements the statutory requirement to teach about puberty as part of Science and Health Education, as understanding sexual reproduction in humans enables children to understand the processes of puberty.

The following process must be followed if a parent or carer wishes to withdraw their child from sex education:

- A letter will be sent out prior to the lessons of sex education, explaining to parents and carers the content of the lessons before they are delivered.
- Parents and carers should contact the school via telephone or email, addressing their requests to withdraw to the headteacher.
- As above, the headteacher will arrange a meeting with the parents/carers to discuss their request. This will ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum being delivered. It may be appropriate for the child to be present.
- The headteacher will discuss with the parent/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any adverse effects that withdrawal might have on the pupil, for example, social and emotional effects of being excluded.
- The outcome will be recorded and the parent/carers will be informed in writing of the headteacher's decision.

When a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the headteacher will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate alternative education.

Safeguarding

RSHE includes sensitive topics. It is, therefore, possible that discussions will prompt safeguarding disclosures. Reference should be made to safeguarding policies and procedures to deal with these appropriately.

The subject leader/teacher should discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead any potentially sensitive topics. Appropriate steps must be taken to provide additional support for children if required.

Staff should consider the timing of lessons to ensure that children have the opportunity to report any concerns they may have either that day or the following day.

Confidentiality within the classroom is an important component of relationships, sex and health education, and teachers are expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils as far as is possible. Pupils will be informed of the school's responsibilities in terms of confidentiality and will be aware of what action may be taken if they choose to report a concern or make a disclosure.

RSHE should not be a time for children to make disclosures. It is important, however, to inform children of the support that is available to them if they are worried about anything raised in a lesson. The following support will be highlighted to children as appropriate:

In school:

- The Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead
- Class teachers
- Headteacher

External support:

- Local agencies
- National agencies, such as Childline or NSPCC.

Monitoring and evaluating

The headteacher and subject leader will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating RSHE in line with other subjects.

They will monitor regularly, including:

- Scrutiny of planning to ensure progression within and across year groups
- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Evidence of learning and discussions with pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Feedback from parents and carers via surveys
- Feedback from children through pupil voice activities

Professional development

The headteacher and subject leader will assess the professional development needs of staff regularly. Appropriate development will be provided using internal or external expertise. All staff members at school will ensure they are up to date with the relationship, sex and health education programme and associated issues. Members of staff responsible for teaching the subjects will undergo further training to ensure they are fully equipped to deliver lessons effectively. Training of staff will be scheduled around any updated guidance and based on feedback from staff on what further support they require to deliver a high-quality RSHE curriculum.

Communication of policy

This RSHE policy will be available to read and download from the school website; copies can be requested free of charge from the school office.

Review

The CEO is responsible for approving this policy.

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis by the PSHE subject leader and headteacher. It is due to be reviewed in September 2026.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff, parents and, where necessary, pupils.

Policy written by: A. Garner

Date: September 2024

To be reviewed: September 2026

Policy audited by: Cathy Murphy, PSHE Lead Advisor for PSHE Service

Date: November 2022