



Willow Brook Primary School

Personal, Social, Health Education Policy (PSHE)

(including Relationships and Health Education)

Context

All schools must provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002, a PSHE curriculum:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

This policy is based on the statutory guidance document "[Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)" (DfE, 2019) and supplementary guidance from PSHE.org.

Department for Education guidance states that from September 2020, all primary schools must teach Relationships and Health Education. The teaching of sex education in primary schools remains non-statutory, except for the elements of sex education contained in the science national curriculum including the main external body parts, the human life cycle (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. Other related topics that fall within the statutory requirements for Health Education, such as puberty and menstrual wellbeing, will be included within PSHE education lessons.

Within the statutory guidance document for RSE and Health Education, the DfE also encourages schools to deliver age-appropriate sex education if they feel their pupils need this information:

"It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement...."

"It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born."

Within this policy, as in the DfE guidance, **Relationships Education** is defined as teaching about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. Our definition of Relationships Education includes all of those elements defined within this statutory topic – these are detailed below in the 'RSE Curriculum' section.

Sex Education is defined as teaching children how human reproduction occurs, including how a baby is conceived. This draws on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science. For the purposes of this policy, we specifically identify any non-statutory Sex Education that falls outside of science and those related elements (the physical changes associated with puberty) within statutory Health Education.

RATIONALE AND ETHOS

At Willow Brook, RSE is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school vision - to create a caring, positive and stimulating environment in which our community learns and grows in confidence, knowledge and skills.

Through our PSHE programme we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, confident and responsible citizens. In providing children with an understanding of healthy and respectful relationships and appropriate boundaries, we consider effective RSE to be a fundamental part of our approach.

RSE is lifelong learning about personal, physical, moral and emotional development. It is set in the context of clear values about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships and should teach children and young people to develop and form positive values, attitudes, personal and social skills, and increase their knowledge and understanding of how to make informed decisions and life choices.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) forms part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum in our school. PSHE lessons are taught by class teachers, supported by expert visitors as appropriate and necessary. Teaching staff receive training in the delivery of the RSE curriculum through dedicated staff meetings.

As a school we are aware that the primary responsibility for providing children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We recognise the need to develop a shared understanding of RSE and to deliver an effective programme that meets the needs of Willow Brook pupils.

THE RSE CURRICULUM

At Willow Brook we use the PSHE.org Scheme of Work for PSHE. The content of this policy, as well as our PSHE curriculum, has been developed in relation to the needs of our pupils and in consultation with school staff and Governors. As is required by the new statutory guidance, parents have also been consulted on the relevant content within the policy.

STATUTORY RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

As part of our PSHE/Relationships Education programme of study, children will be taught what a relationship is; the different types of relationships they might have e.g. with family members, friends, and other adults; the importance of healthy and secure relationships to wellbeing; what constitutes a healthy relationship, in person and online; how to set and observe appropriate boundaries in relationships; how to recognise when a situation is unsafe; strategies for dealing with situations that they find uncomfortable or that are unsafe; and sources of help and advice.

A summary of the key objectives of the statutory Relationships Education curriculum is set out below.

Families and people who care for me

Children should know:

- that families are important for children 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

Pupils should know:

- 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, and 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, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships

Pupils should know:

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- 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 in 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 different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships

Pupils should know:

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by 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 including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

Pupils should know:

- 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; including 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 (in all contexts, including online) whom 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 or 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 get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

NON-STATUTORY SEX EDUCATION

As part of statutory Health Education, children are taught in an age appropriate way about puberty and the associated physical and emotional changes. As part of the science curriculum, children learn in Year 5 about how reproduction occurs in some plants and animals. The DfE guidance 2019 also recommends that all primary schools have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of pupils, and this should include how a baby is conceived and born. Although sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, we believe children should understand the facts about human reproduction before they leave primary school. We therefore provide some non-statutory sex education, covering how human reproduction and conception occurs. This is included in the summer term. Children in Year 5 and 6 are taught:

- that for a baby to begin to grow, part comes from a mother and part comes from a father; that in most animals including humans the baby grows inside the mother.
- that for a baby to be made, a sperm from the father and an egg from the mother must meet; that this can happen when an adult man and woman share an especially close and loving embrace that is a loving and very private part of a grown-up relationship (no detail on what this involves).
- that when a sperm and egg meet, this is called conception; that conception usually occurs as a result of sexual intercourse, and what sexual intercourse means (Year 6)
- how a baby develops in the womb and how babies are born (Year 6).

We believe that teaching this additional content to pupils will ensure that they are better prepared for transition to secondary school and also support their personal and social development as they grow into young adults. As is legally prescribed, parents have a right to withdraw their children from non-statutory sex education lessons.

All elements of our Relationships & Sex Education programme will be delivered in an age-appropriate manner as part of our regular timetabled PSHE education programme. RSE is delivered by class teachers in mixed gender groups. Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE in school, for example the school nurse. All visitors will be familiar with and understand the school's RSE policy and be expected to work within it.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

We aim to provide an environment and atmosphere for RSE where pupils feel safe, relaxed, unintimidated, and focused. This ensures that both pupils and staff feel confident in engaging in age-appropriate discussions around topics and themes.

Ground rules encourage teachers to follow basic guidelines. These include:

- Showing respect to everybody's contribution.
- No personal information - no names.
- No personal questions.
- An age-appropriate rule around confidentiality and safeguarding

Using anonymous question boxes is a useful tool. These can help children to have the confidence to ask sensitive questions, and they provide an opportunity for teachers to pre-empt questions that might not be age appropriate or that might raise safeguarding or child protection concerns.

MANAGING DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

During both formal and informal PSHE/RSE sessions, pupils are encouraged to ask questions. Any questions from pupils are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil concerned, and if the teacher delivering the session deems it appropriate to answer. Teachers will:

- use specific ground rules for this work which will clarify boundaries for children/young people
- clarify that personal questions should not be asked
- clarify that pupils should not give out personal information in class but speak to someone they trust the lesson, e.g. school nurse, teacher, pastoral staff.

Children may also be signposted back to parents/carers who have ultimate responsibility in talking to their children about sensitive matters. We will also encourage parents to talk with school if they have any questions or queries, and if they would like advice on how to better support their child at home.

RESOURCES

At Willow Brook we use the PSHE.org Scheme of Work, which provides a comprehensive scheme of planning and resources, which is periodically updated to ensure it remains relevant and meets all statutory requirements. Class teachers review the planning and resources for each lesson to ensure they are fully relevant and tailor them if necessary. Additional resources may be used if considered appropriate.

The resources we use in delivering non-statutory sex education include the Living and Growing series, in Years 5 and 6. This series is designed to provide an age-appropriate perspective and contextualises the facts about human conception and reproduction within a committed, loving adult relationship. These materials are available for parents/carers to view on request.

SAFEGUARDING

In providing children with an understanding of healthy relationships and appropriate boundaries, we understand that RSE is an important part of our school's approach to safeguarding.

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Teachers will take these matters seriously and speak to the child away from the class as a matter of priority. Concerns will be brought to the attention of the headteacher and deputy head, the designated safeguarding lead and child protection officer within the school. The headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals. (See also Safeguarding Policy).

INCLUSIVITY

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Our pupils have different needs based on their emotional and physical development, life experiences, and learning differences, but we aim to ensure that all pupils are included fully in RSE. Teachers will deliver work in a variety of ways to meet the needs of individual pupils with SEN or learning differences. We focus on activities that increase a pupil's assertiveness, communication and relationship skills as well as their self-esteem and understanding.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

Schools, like all public institutions, have specific responsibilities in relation to equality and protected characteristics. Planning and resources are reviewed to ensure they comply with equalities legislation and policy.

All RSE is taught without bias and in line with legal responsibilities. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils can form their own informed opinions but also respect others that may have different opinions. The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff delivering RSE will not influence the teaching of the subject in school.

In our school we seek to recognise and embrace the diverse nature of our community. We aim to value and celebrate religious, ethnic and cultural diversity as part of modern Britain. We will explore cultural beliefs and values and encourage activities that challenge stereotypes and discrimination, presenting children with accurate information based on the law. We will reflect the diversity of our community and encourage a sense of inclusiveness.

Whilst the detailed nature of what it means to have certain protected characteristics (for example gender reassignment) is not covered by our PSHE sessions, it is important that children have the correct vocabulary to navigate and reflect on the world in which they live. We also aim to encourage an informed understanding of different families and children within our community. Our assemblies within school will include vocabulary and a basic understand of terms such as, age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex (male or female); sexual orientation. The content of any discussions within classrooms will be factual and age appropriate.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/PARENTAL RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary providers of RSE for their children. Our RSE curriculum is designed to support and complement this. We aim to build a positive and supportive relationship with parents and carers through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

In promoting this we will:

- Inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice;
- Provide opportunities to view videos, lesson plans and resources used in the RSE programme;
- Answer any questions that parents may have about RSE for their child;
- Take seriously any issues or concerns that parents raise.

We will inform parents of the right to withdraw by letter in the first part of summer term in advance of any non-statutory sex education lessons being taught. Parents and carers who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education should talk with the class teacher or the head teacher, who will explore any concerns and discuss resources being used. The issue of withdrawal will be handled as sensitively as possible. Parents should also understand that the decision to remove their child from these lessons means that they themselves will assume responsibility for talking to their children about any related sex education themes covered outside of National Curriculum Science.

LOCATION AND DISSEMINATION

Copies of this policy are held by the Headteacher and members of staff. Further copies are available on the school website and from the school office on request from parents.

Signed by

_____ Headteacher Date:

_____ Chair of Governors Date:

Presented to Governors in November 2023