

Welburn Community Primary School Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Introduction:

This policy was produced following guidance from the Department for Education (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Healthy Education 2019) and through consultation with our staff, governing body and parents/carers.

It will be reviewed regularly by the PSHE subject leader to ensure that it reflects the attitudes and beliefs of the school population and remains up to date with both current guidance from the Government and the DfE but remains relevant to the experiences of our pupils.

To ensure its use, this policy will be available for staff to refer to by July 2021 and to parents through the website.

The policy reflects our school's overarching vision and values for our pupils by striving for all children to achieve their full potential and to have high aspirations for the future.

As a school we have a legal responsibility under The Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, to provide comprehensive Relationship Education and Health Education for all pupils receiving primary education.

As part of the Education Act 2002 all schools must provide a balanced and broad-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school, whilst preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We also have a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the best for all pupils irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion, sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children. As a result, RSE needs to be sensitive to the difference needs of individual pupils and may need to adapt and change as the pupils within the school change. We need to help pupils realise the nature and

consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours or prejudice-based language.

As a school we are aware we need to be mindful of and respectful to a wide variety of faith and cultural beliefs and we will make every attempt to be appropriately sensitive. Equally, it is essential that young people still have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals which must include clear, impartial scientific and factual information. This will include naming body parts, puberty, menstruation, masturbation, the variety of family structures, gay marriage, gender identity, gender equality, sexuality, contraception, forced marriage and FGM. All teaching should reflect the law as it applies to relationships, marriage, adoption and care.

Defining Relationships Education:

The Department for Education defines relationships education as “teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other peers and adults”.

At Welburn we believe relationships education is designed to help children develop the skills to recognise and manage healthy relationships both online and in the real world. It is designed to build self-esteem and to explore personal identity. It is about helping children understand the world they are growing up in and to support them in recognising the similarities and differences between their peers and their families. It is also designed to help them understand their uniqueness and that they have the right to be respected.

We teach our pupils about different relationships and families and to be respectful of other sexualities and genders when and where it arises throughout school. This is because the national curriculum covers learning about families and this integrates well within the topic. All of our teaching is sensitive and age appropriate, in terms of content and approach.

Relationships education has been shown to help keep children safe by allowing them to understand appropriate and inappropriate touching and to realise that their body is their own. They learn about consent and personal boundaries along with the difference between public and private behaviours. It is also important for children to know the names

and functions of their body parts. We also believe relationship education helps children develop their vocabulary and emotional literacy to enable them to talk about and manage their feelings. It helps children build their own support networks and the confidence to ask for help when they feel unsafe. This is a required element of the Health Education Guidance.

Defining Sex Education at Primary School:

Sex education is currently not compulsory in primary schools. The Department for Education recommends that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils.

We, like many schools, already choose to teach some aspects of sex education. Our sex education lessons are solely for the pupils in Year 6.

We recognise that some parents may be uncomfortable with the thought of their children receiving sex education in primary school. We equally recognise that it is natural for children to have questions about sex, their bodies and to be curious about where they came from. We believe it is better for children to receive age appropriate answers and information from trusted adults.

In our school, sex education is an opportunity to answer children's questions about where they came from and for them to be clear about how a baby is conceived and formed as set out in a human life cycle which is covered through the national curriculum for science. It should ensure that all children are prepared for both the physical and emotional changes of puberty, including menstruation. Children need to understand how both girls and boys' bodies function and change as they grow into adults.

We believe that sex education should allow children a safe space to ask the questions they may have without judgement or shame. Starting learning in primary school is a way to prevent the topic of sex, reproduction and private body parts becoming taboo. It is the duty of our school to give our young people the learning that will enable them to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. This includes ensuring that they have the skills to keep themselves safe from harm and develop positive and healthy relationships, free from exploitation, pressure or abuse.

Subject content:

In school we strive for pupils to meet the learning outcomes set out in the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Healthy Education Regulations. We follow the North Yorkshire PSHE and Citizenship Entitlement Framework in order to achieve this. This can be found on the North Yorkshire County Council Website.

The PSHE units covered across all classes in school are:

- Me and my relationships
- Keeping myself safe
- My healthy lifestyle
- Me and my future
- Becoming an active citizen.

Relationship Education covers:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Health Education covers:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic First Aid
- Changing adolescent body (puberty)

Sex Education covers:

- How conception occurs

- Pregnancy
- Birth

Relationship, Sex and Health Education is delivered by class teachers. Sex Education is delivered to Sycamore Class by their class teacher. We believe it is important for this area of learning to be delivered in this way as the children are already comfortable with those staff members and the adults know the pupils well too. This means they will know any additional needs, support or sensitive issues that may need to be taken into consideration when delivering the content.

We do not separate our classes by sex throughout this learning, including lessons on puberty. This is because we feel it is important that both boys and girls learn about each other's bodies, changes and experiences. By keeping pupils together in this way, children will learn to talk openly without embarrassment and we can work to break down stereotypes whilst showing respect for each other. Our intent is for the learning to be inclusive to all pupils. However, girls are given an additional session on how to manage periods and they can ask questions in a safe environment.

E-safety and healthy relationships online are regularly discussed as part of this area of learning. It explores relationships, secrets, boundaries and rights and responsibilities.

Answering Children's Questions:

We are aware that children are likely to have many questions that occur at any time. We see this as a positive and that we have created a safe environment where children feel comfortable enough to ask what is on their mind. However, we acknowledge that some parents may feel uncomfortable about how particular questions may be dealt with in class.

We believe that children are better off receiving honest, open answers from the safe adults in their lives. In today's society, where children have access to alternative sources of information it is essential that we help children to recognise they are able to ask questions without judgement rather than searching for answers elsewhere.

By tackling the topic in a matter of fact manner without embarrassment means that we take the mystic allure out of the topic, making sex no longer a taboo subject. However uncomfortable a proposition may be it is far better than the alternative. For children these questions are not rude, they are signs of a healthy and natural curiosity. We can stop the topic becoming taboo and embarrassing and work to remove any stigma before it has chance to form.

If children ask a question we believe they deserve an answer. If ignored they may build unnecessary barriers and may be unlikely to ask other questions in the future. As safe adults we will take responsibility and tackle the question safely and age appropriately.

As a school we will use the following techniques when answering children's questions:

- Children will be praised for asking questions.
- If a question is relevant to the whole class we will answer it to the whole group.
- If there is a need to differentiate due to pupils' knowledge and experience then this will be done.
- If a child asks a question that is not necessarily suitable for the entire class we will respond by saying "that is a fantastic question. Hold that thought. I am going to set everyone some work and I will come and answer your question in a moment."
- If the member of staff does not know the answer, they will say so. They should then make an effort to help the child find the answer appropriately later.
- If the member of staff is not sure how best to answer a tricky question, our suggested response is "That is a brilliant questions. I would like to give you an accurate answer so let me have a think about it and once I know the best way to explain it clearly I will come back to you". This will allow staff time to think and seek help or advice from colleagues where needed.
- If a child asks a question we know parents may be uncomfortable with, staff may choose to delay answering the question (as above) until they have spoken to the parent/carer and talked through their response.
- Teachers will answer questions openly, honestly, scientifically and factually without relying on their own personal beliefs. Teachers will not be expected to answer personal questions about

themselves or to ask direct questions of their students that could make either parties vulnerable.

In Sycamore Class, when puberty and sex education are being taught, children have the opportunity to ask questions anonymously in a question box. This allows the teacher to decide how, where and who should answer the question.

Parents and Parental Rights to Withdraw:

We believe that successful teaching of RSE relies on parents/carers and the school working together. We endeavour to be transparent and give parents information about the programmes and lessons we deliver around RSE as we recognise it can be a sensitive subject. We also recognise the importance of parents knowing about the content of the lessons so that they can continue conversations at home where they have the opportunity to talk to their children about their own families, beliefs and values. A link to the NYCC PSHE Entitlement Framework is listed in the Appendix, which highlights the learning outcomes for each year group. If further information is required, parents should talk to class teachers.

Under the new guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Healthy Education, parents have the right to request their child is removed from some or all of the elements of sex education which go beyond the national curriculum for science. As a school we have made the decision to deliver sex education (defined previously). **Children cannot be withdrawn from the national curriculum.** This includes learning about puberty. Should a parent decide to withdraw their children from any sex education lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the class teacher about their concerns. We will happily show any teaching materials and resources and explain why we are using them. If parents decide to withdraw their child after these discussions we will ensure that alternative learning is provided during the time they will be removed.

Policy on Menstruation:

We recognise that the onset of menstruation can be a confusing or distressing time for children if they are not prepared. As a school we

acknowledge a responsibility to prepare children for menstruation and make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help children manage their period. We also have sanitary products for children who may not have access to these at home.

We are aware that period poverty exists in the UK and that some children are forced to avoid attending school if they are on their period. We do not want that to be the case in our school and will make every effort to support children to access their education and enjoy school during these times.

Puberty is occurring earlier than ever before and it is now not uncommon for children to start their periods in primary school. Because of this, we deliver puberty lessons to all children in year 5 and 6. As part of these lessons all children will be told about menstruation and will discuss what periods are and other symptoms associated with periods. The girls will then learn how periods can be managed hygienically and sensitively. During these lessons we will take the opportunity to highlight the location of sanitary bins and explain how these are used.

Menstruation is a healthy bodily function and should not be something that a person is made to feel embarrassed, shameful or teased about. As a school we need to treat each other with respect and empathy, including areas such as this.

When school trips and residentials are arranged, provisions to deal with a child's period needs to be considered and prepared for.

Safeguarding Children:

The school is committed to ensuring that pupils are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable, how they can keep themselves safe and how to share a concern or complain. We inform pupils of who they might talk to, both in and out of school, their right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm. For further details, please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.

When teaching a sensitive topic, such as RSE which deals with family life, safe and appropriate touching, personal body parts and healthy relationships, we recognise the potential to uncover incidents of abuse through children's disclosures. All members of staff have statutory training around safeguarding children and are all aware of our school's

safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern. We recognise that for children who may be vulnerable due to past or present abuse or changes in family situations may need additional support and the programme may need to be adapted. It is also a protective factor in preventing further abuse, to help them make sense of their experiences and is essential to help develop skills and resilience to keep them safe in the future.

Assessment and Evaluation:

Assessment of PSHE and Citizenship is about assessing the extent to which children are progressing in their learning and the impact the learning is having on the pupils. It is important that the children's learning is assessed because it provides feedback on progress and achievements as well as how their learning might be improved. It also allows staff and governors to see the impact the provision is having for pupils in terms of whole school outcomes.

Assessment in RSE needs to establish what children already know and understand, what they have misunderstood and what preconceptions or prejudices may have to be challenged.

The children are continually assessed against the learning outcomes in the Assessment for Learning.