



Sex & Relationships Policy



'Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day'

Reviewed By	Aimee Reilly	Policy Owner	September 2019
Approved by	Cate Gregory	Head of School	September 2019
Ratified by	Matthew Corkhill	Governor	September 2019
NEXT REVIEW			September 2021

At Shirley Infant School we believe that children should have the opportunity to develop high self-esteem, with the ability to form secure, healthy relationships, and make informed decisions about moral and social issues both online and within the community. The sequences of lessons aim to provide children with age appropriate learning to make real, informed decisions that improve their physical and emotional health whilst recognising that choices can have good and not so good consequences.

Our teaching, at an age appropriate level, will aim to help our children cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up, giving them appropriate understanding of human reproduction. Relationships and sex education is a continuing, developmental process, which includes the exploration of attitudes and values and the development of skills, as well as the presentation of factual knowledge. As with all learning it is gradual and matched to the child's maturity and stage of development.

It develops children's awareness of, and respect for themselves and others by adding their development of positive self-esteem, which will help children to cope with the challenges of personal growth. It enables children to be aware of the personal choices they can make and prepares them to make responsible decisions. It allows them to explore feelings and emotions through a variety of different contexts and enjoy the confidence in their own ability.

As part of the Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education set out by the Department for Education, pupils are taught about the nature, uniqueness and importance of family life and the wider community. Pupils will learn about respectful relationships (including friendships), significance of marriage and stable relationships, however, care is taken so that no child is stigmatized because of his/her home circumstances and staff should be aware of these before beginning a lesson/circle time containing such nature.

The objective of Relationship and Sex Education is to help and support our pupils through their physical, emotional and moral development. This is firmly embedded in to our PSHE scheme of work. We will help our pupils learn to respect themselves and others, supporting prevent and safe guarding policies, and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

What is Relationship and Sex Education?

Relationship and Sex Education is about the physical, moral and emotional development. It supports their understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.

Relationship and Sex Education has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values:

- Learning the importance of values and moral considerations
- Learning the value of family life, respectful relationships and communities
- Learning the value of love, respect and care

Personal and Social Skills:

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing empathy and self-respect.
- Learning to make choices without prejudice
- Appreciating the consequences of choices made
- Managing conflict
- Recognizing and avoiding exploitation and abuse
- Being safe online and accessing safe media
- Physical health and fitness
- Mental wellbeing

Knowledge and understanding:

- Learning about and understanding physical development
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- Lessons are delivered, planned, prepared and resourced in an age appropriate way. For example, we teach keeping clean and transfer of germs which lays the foundations for later key stages to build on sexually transmitted disease later in their school curriculum.

We ensure the materials used in schools are in accordance with the PSHE framework and the law. Inappropriate images will never be used nor should explicit material not directly related to explanation. We ensure that our pupils are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and cultural background of the pupils concerned. Our Governors and head teacher would discuss with parents and take on board concerns raised, both on materials which are offered to schools and on sensitive material to be used in the classroom. We have also formed a committee of staff, governors and parents to meet, discuss and develop our school provision within RSE.

We also want to ensure that children are protected from accessing unsuitable materials on the Internet. We have followed the "Child Exploitation and Online Protection" centre guidance which outlines how we allow our children to access the Internet safely and prevent our children from accessing unsuitable material.

Planning and Teaching

The Department of Education will be making it mandatory as of September 2020 that all primary schools should have a relationship and sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children. This is something, as a school, we have already used and believed in. It should ensure that both boys and girls know about puberty and how a baby is born – as set out in Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Science Curriculum. All children, including those who develop earlier than the average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes. In the early primary school years, education about relationships needs to focus on friendship, bullying and the building of self-esteem.

Meeting these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of sex and relationship education. Teaching methods need to take account of the developmental differences of children and the potential for discussion on a one to- one basis or in small groups. We have set out a framework for establishing what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting.

Parents and pupils are reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of sex and relationship education within the PSHE framework. Our teachers and all those contributing to sex and relationship education are expected to work within an agreed values framework as described in the school's policy, which must be in line with current legislation.

Teachers may require support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class. We will always endeavour to support our teachers who may need support and training to deliver the programme sensitively and effectively. All staff have access to the PSHE association resources and this has also informed our planning.

The combined PSHE and Citizenship framework at Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is developed through four broad themes and makes clear what is appropriate in the early primary years and the transition year.

- developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of pupils' abilities
- preparing to play an active role as citizens
- developing a healthier, safer lifestyle
- developing good relationships and respecting differences between people in line with prevent

At primary school level sex and relationship education should contribute to the foundation of PSHE and Citizenship by ensuring that all children:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships
- are able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work
- can protect themselves and ask for help and support
- are prepared for puberty
- develop happy, secure, respectful and appropriate relationships both online and in the real world

It is essential that we help our pupils develop in confidence in talking, listening and thinking about sex and relationships. We are aware teachers and other staff may need to overcome their own anxieties and embarrassment to do this effectively. Partnership between school and parents is the key to success. We aim to use a number of teaching strategies that can help this, including:

- establishing ground rules with their pupils
- using 'distancing' techniques
- knowing how to deal with unexpected questions or comments from pupils
- using discussion and project learning methods and appropriate materials and encouraging reflection

As part of our Science Curriculum at Key Stage 1 we cover the following areas as part of our embedded PSHE curriculum:

- that animals including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce
- to recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans
- that humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults
- to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity

Whenever, a PSHE session or circle time takes place we as a staff will always ensure a set of ground rules is discussed before each session. This will help create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from pupils. New Ground rules might be developed as part of the sex and relationship education session or individually with each class or year group. For example, one class worked out this set of ground rules together:

- no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question;
- no one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
- only the correct names for body parts will be used; and
- meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Dealing with questions

Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Many teachers are concerned about responding to unexpected questions or comments from pupils in a whole-class situation. Having a set of ground rules should reduce the chances of this happening but teachers will need support and training so that they are prepared for the unexpected. For example:

- If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as a school counsellor, school nurse, helpline, or an outside agency or service.
- If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the pupil or teacher or both together research the question later.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the pupil will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information.
- To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the pupil later; and
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's child protection procedures.

Parents who withdraw their children

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationship education provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (see section 3). We would make alternative arrangements in such cases.

Health professionals

Where appropriate we work closely with health professionals in the development and implementation of their sex and relationship education programmes. Our school nurse supports us by:

- working closely with teachers in supporting sex and relationship education in the school (complementing the role of the teacher).
- helping us work in partnership with parents and make links between the school and other relevant professionals and services such as local GPs, family planning clinics, Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM) clinics etc.
- telling pupils about the health services that are available in the area and help them develop the confidence and skills to make good use of them.
- giving pupils confidential support and advice, perhaps through services such as drop-in sessions; and
- they can provide specific and up-to-date knowledge about sexual health and well-being and contraception.

Child Protection Issues

In addition to what is put in place in our school's sex and relationship education policy to inform and counsel our pupils, there will be rare occasions when a primary school teacher is directly approached by a child who is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity. This will always raise child protection issues and sensitive handling will be needed to ensure that a proper balance is struck between the need to observe the law and the need for sensitive counselling and treatment including protection from disclosure to inappropriate adults. In such cases there should be a pathway for dealing with the situation:

- the teacher should approach the designated member of staff (this could be the sex and relationship education teacher, or other member of staff with pastoral responsibility or on-site health professional).
- the designated member of staff should make sensitive arrangements, in discussion with the child, to ensure that parents or carers are informed.
- the designated member of staff should address child protection issues and ensure that help is provided for the child and family.

Disclosures from pupils may take place at an inappropriate place or time. If this happens, the teacher should talk again individually to the pupil before the end of the school day. The teacher may be able to discuss the issue with an appropriate colleague without giving the name of the pupil. If not, the teacher should follow the school's confidentiality policy.

We ensure we are absolutely clear about the boundaries of our legal and professional roles and responsibilities. A clear and explicit confidentiality policy is in place and ensures good practice throughout the school which both pupils and parents understand. Pupils are gently informed that teachers cannot keep disclosures confidential if it raises concerns.

We are very aware children cannot learn effectively if they are concerned or frightened about being abused or being the victims of violence in the home. They have a right to expect schools to provide a safe and secure environment. Any fears or worries they bring into the classroom should not go unnoticed by staff. Teachers are aware that effective sex and relationship education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

- If a member of a school's staff (teaching or non-teaching) suspects that a child is a victim of abuse or they have reason to believe that he/she is at risk of abuse, they should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns and to whom they should do so. They should follow the procedures laid out in the **Child Protection Policy**.

Joint guidance by DfEE and the Department of Health published in 1999 – "Working Together to Safeguard Children" – sets out how all agencies and professionals should work together to promote children's welfare and protect them from abuse and neglect.

Further information

Dfe Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (recent publication about Sept 2020)
Dfe National Healthy Schools Standards Guidance 1999
QCA The National Curriculum Handbook 2000 for Primary Teachers in England
OFSTED Sex and Relationships (HMI 433)
DfE The national curriculum in England Key stages 1 and 2 framework document Sept 2016
PSHE association website