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Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Shiplake C of E Primary School

"Relationships Education and RSE must be inclusive and meet the needs of all pupils… [and] provide relationships education and RSE that is suitable for pupils with different needs."

- Church of England Education Office Response to a Call for Evidence on RSE Curriculum p2)

Introductory statement

This policy covers our whole school approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) together with Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

PSHE enables our children to become healthy, independent and responsible members of a society. It aims to help them understand how they are developing personally and socially, and tackles many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are all part of growing up. We provide our children with opportunities for them to learn about rights and responsibilities and appreciate what it means to be a member of a diverse society. Our children are encouraged to develop their sense of self-worth by playing a positive role in contributing to school life and the wider community.

RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

All children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led PSHE and RSE. Through providing high quality PHSE and RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference. Our school Values promote Truthfulness, Compassion, Equality, Friendship and Wisdom.

Intent

To build a PSHE/RSE curriculum which develops learning and results in the acquisition of knowledge and skills enabling children to access the wider curriculum. We intend to prepare children to be a global citizen now and in their future roles within a global community.
The curriculum will demonstrate appropriate subject knowledge, skills and understanding to fulfil the duties of the Relations Education (RE), Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (HE) whereby schools must provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities and responsibilities and experiences for later life.

This policy was produced in consultation with our staff, board of governors, pupils and parents. We will ensure the policy is effectively communicated to staff and parents, including through publishing the policy on our school website.

The information below complies with our statutory obligations to deliver PSHE and RSE under sections 34 & 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It also has due regard for the DfE's (Department for Education) statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance and other relevant guidance.

We will review the policy on a regular basis (every 3 years) to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSE programme continues to meet the needs of our pupils.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Computing, PE, Safeguarding, KCSIE and Science Policies.

Equality, inclusion and social justice

'*Schools should consider what they can do to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls; and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole school approach.*'

- Department for Education (2019, p.14)

At Shiplake C of E Primary school we promote the needs and interests of pupils, irrespective of gender, culture, ability, personal circumstance or religion (etc.) by promoting a 'safe space' policy, respecting the views of others and teaching through our school Values; Friendship, Compassion, Equality, Truthfulness and Wisdom.

RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes, sexism and sexual harassment in school. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum.

We are also committed to teach a PSHE and RSE curriculum that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to LGBT+ [1] inclusion and SEND[2] inclusion and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject.

We will also ensure that we consider the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE.

Inclusive RSE at Shiplake Primary School will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

"Children should be at liberty to explore the possibilities of who they might be without judgement or derision. For example, a child may choose the tutu, princess's tiara and heels and/or the firefighter's helmet, tool belt and superhero cloak without expectation or comment. Childhood has a sacred space for creative self-imagining."

- Valuing All God's Children, Church of England (2019, p.20)

1 LGBT+ refers to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, and to people with gender expressions outside traditional norms, including nonbinary, intersex, and other queer people (and those questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation).

2 SEND stands for Special Educational Needs and Disability.

3 https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/evidence/sre-evidence - Briefing which aims to provide an accessible and accurate summary of the research evidence relating to relationships and sex education (RSE), particularly the contribution of RSE to behaviour change. It includes findings about RSE from the third British National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (Natsal).

Definition of relationships and sex education

'The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.'

(DfE Guidance, p25)

At Shiplake C of E School, we use a gender equity and human rights framework for RSE. We take a positive, inclusive and affirmative approach that accepts children's and young people's experiences and enables them to be explored sensitively.

To meet the aims outlined in the DfE Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Guidance, we will equip our pupils to build positive relationships online and offline (see computing policy). We seek to ensure our curriculum gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- value their health, wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- accept and value their personal and identity and the personal identities of others
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

High quality, comprehensive RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity.

"RSE … should seek to develop understanding that there are a variety of relationships and family patterns in the modern world."

- Valuing All God's Children, Church of England (2019, p.34)

Evidence shows[3] that effective RSE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing unprotected or unwanted sex and reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Subject content

Our curriculum programme is developed by Sarah Thomas in conjunction with the views of teachers, governors, pupils and parents.

At Shiplake C of E Primary School, we teach to the learning objectives and content outlined in the DfE Relationships Education, RSE, PSHE and Health Education Guidance. All content will be delivered in a timely way and will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of our pupils, including those pupils with SEND.

Our scheme of work follows the PSHE Association thematic approach (see curriculum map attached). The scheme covers all three core themes of the Programme of Study; 'Health and Wellbeing', 'Relationships' and 'Living in the Wider World' over the school year, with three topics per half term. This approach allows different year groups to work on similar themes at the same time, building a spiral programme year on year, whilst offering flexibility in terms of medium term planning. The colour coded topic areas can be adapted to meet the requirements, pupils' stage of development and needs and also to reflect the context of the school and local community

We use the following resources/materials to deliver PHSE and RSE: PSHE Association, SCARF, SEAL, Twinkl and more.

Subject delivery

'Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme or lessons.'

- Department for Education (2019, p.8)

RSE will be delivered at Shiplake C of E Primary School as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons (weekly or as a block) across all key stages, using a spiral curriculum approach (a course of study in which pupils will see the same topics throughout their school career, with each encounter increasing in complexity and reinforcing previous learning). We will ensure that pupils with SEND/ EAL receive access to the PSHE/RSE curriculum through inclusive class teaching.

The subject coordinators will work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas (e.g. Science, Computing and PE) to ensure a holistic and joined up approach to what is taught in RSE.

We also supplement learning using a whole school approach and utilising time outside of the classroom. For example, whole school assemblies, Parent/Governor/Friends assemblies, Arts and Drama and School celebrations.

RSE will address aspects of relationships and sex in an integrated way within a single topic. We will not artificially separate learning about real life and online relationships when it is appropriate to integrate this teaching and explore a topic in both contexts. Where an issue is experienced exclusively or disproportionately in an online context, this will be drawn out. (see computing policy)

The programme will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate (e.g. for external body parts). School staff will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when delivering the programme.

All staff who have responsibility for delivering PSHE and RSE will undergo training on a regular basis to ensure they are up-to-date with the policies and curriculum requirements regarding PSHE and RSE.

In addition to ongoing training, CPD will also be scheduled in response to updates to our PSHE and RSE scheme of work and any new development in terms of course content.

Monitoring and Evaluation

'Schools should have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in these subjects as for other curriculum areas.'

- Department for Education (2019, p.43)

We regularly monitor and evaluate our PSHE and RSE scheme of work to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent, that the curriculum is meeting the new national requirements under the Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education guidance, and that learning outcomes are reflective of pupil need.

This policy will be reviewed by the school's leadership team in conjunction with Sarah Thomas and Governors on a regular basis. If changes are needed, members of staff, parents/carers and pupils will be consulted, and any amendments clearly communicated.

The School's Leadership Team monitors and evaluates the implementation of the programme and pupil's knowledge and understanding through:

- Class 'Big books' used throughout the year and continues up with the class throughout their school career.
    - Documents discussions, photos, debates, pupil voice before, during and after each topic area.
    - Big books used as a form of assessment to indicate children's understanding at the beginning and end of each topic.
    - Assess what children know, learn and achieve
- At the back of the Big Books is a class list that evidences individuals' achievements in each topic (Working Towards, Expected or Exceeding).
- Big books to be monitored and shared regularly with Subject leaders and across the school to share good practice.
- Invited to share big books in school assemblies, PHSE assemblies and celebrations.
- Learning Walks to monitor teaching and learning across Year Groups.
- For topics that lend itself; pupil questionnaires will be shared before and after topics to assess current knowledge and support teachers to plan appropriate lessons for each cohort.

Pupil voice

'Listening and responding to the views of young people will strengthen the policy, ensuring that it meets the needs of all pupils'

- Department for Education (2019, p.12)

Pupil voice is central to the culture and ethos of our school. We use pupil voice to evaluate how relevant and engaging PSHE and RSE is to children's lives.

For example, a typical PSHE lesson may include discussion and questioning about the Topic, in hand, for example:

- Feelings Check in
  (Emoji Board)
- Questioning and Debates.
    - "Was he right thinking about that…."
    - "How do you think they felt…"
    - "What would you do differently….."
- School Parliament, Eco Council and PSHE Ambassadors
    - elected through a democratic voting system (British Values)
    - Pupil voice (ownership over playground duties)
    - Fundraising (playground equipment)

Throughout our PSHE and RSE scheme of work we embed pupil voice practices to enable pupils to express their views on the range of topics and issues that PSHE/RSE covers and to ensure that they listen to other opinions and evidence, reflect on their own perspectives and take a broader view.

We want to ensure that all pupil voices are heard but that those views that are hurtful, offensive or exclusionary do not dominate and are addressed appropriately and without delay. We want to ensure a culture where human rights, social justice, inclusion and diversity are promoted.

Answering pupil questions

'The school's policy should cover how the school handles [difficult] questions. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.'

- Department for Education (2019, p.23)

PSHE and RSE explore a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others.

To ensure pupils have every opportunity to ask any question they might have and to avoid loss of dignity for all, school staff may offer pupils the chance to contribute questions anonymously in advance of specific lessons (e.g. on puberty). This will enable staff to research questions and respond with factually accurate information.

As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. If school staff do not feel in position to immediately address questions, they may defer a question and seek more information before responding to pupils.

Questions will always be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way and take into account whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons. If school staff have safe guarding concerns about pupil contributions or questions, they will inform parents/carers/DSL as appropriate.

School staff will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their pupils that could make either party vulnerable.

An open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older pupils. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma and shame that can surround some of the issues explored in PSHE and RSE. Importantly, we believe that children are better protected from harm and abuse when they can discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment.

Working with parents/carers

'All schools should work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when.'

- Department for Education (2019, p.17)

'All schools must have in place a written policy for […] RSE. Schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy.'

- Department for Education (2019, p.11)

Successful teaching of PSHE and RSE involves parents/ carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/ carers can play an important role in the PSHE and RSE of their children through exploring discussions at home that have taken place in school.

Our PSHE and RSE policy has been developed through consulting parents and carers.

See below for how we work with parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of what we teach and when

- Parents' evenings
- Welcome packs
- Sharing copies of the policy through emails/ website
- Termly newsletters to parents/carers giving information about when RSE will be delivered and when certain classes (including classes that involve sex education) will take place

If parents/carers have any concerns or special circumstances that the school should be aware of, or would like any further information about the curriculum, we can designate a time for them to come into school and address any concerns.

We may share examples of key resources we use with parents/carers to reassure them of the content and to enable them to continue the conversations started in class at home. If parents/carers wish to view resources, this can be arranged via the school office.

"Clear and open communication with parents and carers will help them to understand the importance of modelling positive relationships and make sure that pupils are not withdrawn from sex education for reasons based on a misunderstanding of the subject. The role of parents and carers in the development of children's understanding about relationships is vital and they hold the responsibility of ensuring their children grow and mature into healthy relationships."

- Church of England Education Office Response to call for evidence on RSE curriculum

Parental right to request their child be excused from sex education[4]

'All schools should work closely with parents […] and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.'

- Department for Education (2019, p.17)

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSE.

Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education.

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health Education.

Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of RSE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice.

Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the headteacher to discuss their concerns. The headteacher will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum.

If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the headteacher in writing and the school will keep a record of this.

We will remind parents annually that the request to withdraw is still in place and invite them to confirm whether they still want it.

Year 1

Children will learn the correct anatomical names for their body parts as a part of their Science and PSHE curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from this education.

Year 2

Children will learn about how to keep their bodies and minds healthy as part of their PSHE curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from this education.

Year 3

Issues around privacy, appropriate and inappropriate touch and personal boundaries are taught as part of relationships education. Parents are not allowed to withdraw their children from this education.

Year 4
In RSE the children are taught to recognise positive relationships and how to maintain them. Parents do not have the right to request their child is withdrawn.

Year 5
In RSE the children are taught about healthy relationships, physical contact and feeling safe. In Science, they are taught to describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals and describe the changes as humans develop to old age, including puberty. Parents do not have the right to request their child is withdrawn.

Year 6
RSE including healthy relationships, puberty, different types of relationships and sexual reproduction are taught as part of the PSHE curriculum in Year 6. Parents have the right to request their child be withdrawn.

Dangers of drugs and alcohol are taught as part of the science curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw from these lessons.

The information above is based on the Relationships, RSE and Health Education guidance that became statutory from September 2020.

Working with visitors and external agencies

'Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people […] It is important

to agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy.'

- Department for Education (2019, p.18)

From time-to-time we may invite external experts and visitors to deliver parts of our RSE scheme of work.

External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our RSE by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school. External visitors may include school nurses, specialist teachers and/or practitioners.

A teacher will always be present throughout these lessons to build on the pupil's learning after the session/s as well as answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have.

Any external visitor will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy.

We will also ensure that:

- There is appropriate planning, preparatory and follow up work for the session
- The visitor understands the cohort of children involved, including the different ability levels and diversities in identities across protected characteristics. They will also be made aware of any specific issues relating to child protection.

Safeguarding and child protection

'At the heart of these subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education [...] Good practice allows children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased

safeguarding reports.'

- Department for Education (2019, p.42)

Here at Shiplake C of E Primary School, we acknowledge that PSHE and RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019).

RSE helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse or have experienced abuse.

We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers, some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures (see Safeguarding and KCSIE policies).

We will ensure confidentially by ensuring teachers and pupils are clear about what can and cannot be kept confidential, teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality and should verbally explain this to a child if they feel that they are making a disclosure. For example, they may say: "I want to be able to support you with this, but I cannot promise to keep it a secret if I feel you need help from someone else"

External contributors (e.g. the school nurse) are always informed of the schools' confidentiality policy, and whilst working in the classroom they are bound by this and not their own.

"The curriculum should offer opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves and their bodies."

- Valuing All God's Children, Church of England (2019, p.24)

We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons.

While we want to create a learning space that feels safe for children and young people to disclose, we also want to protect children's privacy.

At Shiplake C of E Primary School we do this by using a number of teaching techniques including the use of a working agreement, where rights respecting ground rules are created with pupils on what makes a safe and welcoming environment for all.

At the beginning of each Year in PSHE/RSE each class will discuss 'circle time' rules and sign an agreement to respect each other, tolerate differences and be non-judgemental. This will make up the PSHE display for each class and be referenced in learning and class time appropriately.

Once ground rules have been set, we will check they are in place throughout the school and actively referred to. Through the use of ground rules and other approaches, such as distancing techniques, we believe the school can create a supportive environment for discussions that can be sensitive or difficult.

PSHE and RSE lessons are planned and delivered sensitively to ensure that pupils always have access to the learning they need to stay safe and healthy to protect and enforce their human rights (this includes impartial information in relation to matters such as forced marriage and FGM where age appropriate).

Statement by the Governing Board/Trust

The governance board of Shiplake C of E Primary School adopted this policy in September 2024.

It will review the policy on or no later than September 2027.

In adopting this policy, the Governing Board recognises its responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented effectively, including that the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way the ensures that the school fulfils its legal obligations.

This policy is in compliment to the following policies:

- Child protection/safeguarding
- Bullying
- Computing/online safety

Reference:

- Department for Education (2019) *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.*
  Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education