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# Relationships & Sex Education Policy

October 2024

*Version 2.1*

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## 1 Rationale

- 1.1 The Education Reform Act (Section 1) states that schools should provide a curriculum that "promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils.... and of society; and prepare such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- 1.2 Relationships and Sex Education is an umbrella term for all the teaching and learning we offer pupils to understand their own and others' sexuality, to develop skills for relationships and informed decision making. At Sonning Common Primary School, we believe that relationships and sex education is the entitlement of each child, and we are committed to deliver it within the context of a broad and balanced programme of health education.

## 2 Aims

2.1 In our school we aim through implicit and explicit learning experiences to:

- *Ensure that relationships and sex education is integrated into the curriculum and not isolated, taken out of context or over-emphasised in any way.*
- *Foster self-esteem and respect for others as the cornerstone of good health education and good relationships and sex education.*
- *Nurture a partnership between caring adults - governors, teachers, ancillary staff, and parents - to ensure sensitive support for children and young people as they grow and mature.*
- *Ensure children can accept their own and others' sexuality.*
- *Encourage children to enjoy relationships based upon mutual trust and respect, free from any abuse.*
- *Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.*
- *Adopt a whole school approach to relationships and sex education.*

## 3 Teaching and Learning

3.1 Effective teaching of relationships and sex education will increase pupils' knowledge of:

- *Body knowledge.*
- *Human growth and development.*
- *Families, parenting and life cycles.*
- *Safety and child protection.*
- *Helping agencies.*
- *Sexual identity.*

3.2 It will also enable pupils to:

- *Improve their self-esteem.*
- *Make informed choices and decisions.*
- *Develop personal initiative and be able to take responsibility.*
- *Recognise personal skills and qualities in themselves and others.*
- *Maintain and develop relationships.*
- *Develop self-confidence.*
- *Develop assertiveness in appropriate situations.*
- *Develop the motivation to succeed.*

3.3 In the scheme of work used, a variety of resources (with ideas for suggested use) are identified, including video material, worksheets, visits from the school health nurses and books. However, we emphasise the importance of discussion and questioning within the safe, secure, and non-judgmental atmosphere of the class with its teacher. The atmosphere of trust, mutual acceptance and confidentiality is built on the PSHE programme.

3.4 Within the taught and hidden curriculum, i.e., the whole school environment, pupils should be given frequent and regular opportunities to work on feelings and to practice personal and interpersonal skills. We value and respect the learning that occurs in the community and in the home believing that these, alongside school links, are essential dimensions of relationships and sex education. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from receiving sex education from a PSHE perspective at school, but not to withdraw them from the teaching of the science national curriculum: Sc2 Life processes and living things – 2f: the main stages of the human life cycle.

## **4 Subject content**

4.1 Our curriculum programme is led by Mrs Geleta and Miss Keski (subject leaders) in conjunction with the views of teachers, pupils, and parents.

4.2 At Sonning Common Primary School, we teach to the learning objectives and content outlined in the DfE Relationships Education, RSE 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.

4.3 This material is integrated into our existing PSHE scheme of work and covers the following topics:

#### 4.4 Family and Relationships

##### **Year 1**

- *What is family?*
- *What are friendships?*
- *Recognising other people's emotions*
- *Working with others*
- *Friendship problems*
- *Healthy Friendships*

##### **Year 2**

- *Families offer stability and love*
- *Families are all different*
- *Other people's feelings*
- *Unhappy friendships*
- *Manners & courtesy*
- *Loss and change*
- *Gender stereotypes – careers and jobs*

##### **Year 3**

- *Healthy families*
- *Friendships - conflict*
- *Effective communication*
- *Learning who to trust*
- *Respecting differences*
- *Stereotyping*

##### **Year 4**

- *Respect & manners*
- *Healthy relationships*
- *My behaviour*
- *Bullying*
- *Stereotypes*

##### **Year 5**

- *Friendship skills*
- *Marriage*
- *Respecting myself*
- *Family life*
- *Bullying*
- *Stereotypes*

## **Year 6**

- *Respect*
- *Developing respectful relationships*
- *Challenging stereotypes*
- *Resolving conflict*
- *Loss and change*

## **4.5 Safety and the Changing Body**

### **Year 1**

- *Adults in school*
- *Adults outside of school*
- *Appropriate contact*
- *Getting lost*
- *Safety at home*
- *Safety with substances*

### **Year 2**

- *The Internet*
- *Communicating online*
- *Secrets and surprises*
- *Appropriate contact*
- *Road safety*
- *Respecting personal boundaries*
- *Staying safe with medicine*

### **Year 3**

- *Basic first aid*
- *Communicating safely online*
- *Online safety*
- *Fake emails*
- *Drugs, alcohol & tobacco*
- *Making choices*
- *Influences*
- *Keeping safe out and about*

### **Year 4**

- *Online restrictions*
- *Share aware*
- *Basic first aid*
- *Privacy and secrecy*

- *Consuming information online*
- *The changing adolescent body (puberty)*
- *Drug education*

### **Year 5**

- *Online friendships*
- *Staying safe online*
- *The changing adolescent body (puberty, menstruation and emotional changes)*
- *First aid*
- *Drug education*

### **Year 6**

- *Drugs alcohol & tobacco*
- *First aid*
- *Critical digital consumers*
- *Social media*
- *The changing adolescent body (puberty, conception, pregnancy, birth)*

## **5 Subject delivery**

- 5.1 '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).
- 5.2 RSE will be delivered at Sonning Common Primary School as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons 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).
- 5.3 We also supplement learning using a whole school approach and utilising time outside of the classroom, e.g. assemblies.
- 5.4 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.

## **6 Equality, inclusion, and social justice**

- 6.1 RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion, and social justice. Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism

in school. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum.

- 6.2 We are also committed to RSE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to LGBT+ inclusion and SEND inclusion and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject.
- 6.3 We will also ensure that we consider the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE.
- 6.4 Inclusive RSE at our 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.

## **7 Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 7.1 '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)
- 7.2 We regularly monitor and evaluate our 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.
- 7.3 This policy will be reviewed by the school's leadership team in conjunction with Miss Keski, Mrs Geleta 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.

## **8 Pupil voice**

- 8.1 '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)
- 8.2 Pupil voice is central to the culture and ethos of our school. We use pupil voice to evaluate how relevant and engaging RSE is to children's lives.
- 8.3 Throughout our PSHE scheme of work we embed pupil voice practices to enable pupils to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSE covers and to ensure that they listen to other opinions and evidence, reflect on their own perspectives, and take a broader view.

- 8.4 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.

## 9 Answering pupil questions

- 9.1 '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)
- 9.2 Our PSHE lessons 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 and relationships with others.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 Questions will always be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way and consider whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons. If school staff have concerns about pupil contributions or questions, they will inform parents/carers as appropriate.
- 9.5 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.
- 9.6 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 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.

## 10 Parental right to request their child be excused from sex education

- 10.1 '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).



- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education.
- 10.4 Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum.
- 10.5 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.
- 10.6 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.
- 10.7 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.

## **11 Further Information**

- 11.1 For further Guidance see Oxfordshire's Curriculum Matters.
- 11.2 For information on child protection and confidentiality see OCC guidance.
- 11.3 Our Health Nurse continues to offer support and guidance on any health issues, including sex education.

## **12 Dissemination**

- 1.1 The Policy is available on the school web site and a paper copy is available from the school office on request.

## **13 Reviewing the Policy**

- 13.1 This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the PSHE Subject Leader and monitored by the Link Governor to ensure that the Policy is relevant and up to date.