

Relationships and Health Education Policy

Rationale/Key Principles



"To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support" (DfE, 2019)

Parents and carers are the key people for their child's learning about sex and relationships and schools should always work in partnership with home. Parents and carers need to know that the school's Relationships Education (RSE) programme will complement their role and support them in the education of their child regarding sex and relationships.

Wigginton Primary School will ensure that parents' and carers' views are heard and that taught RHE is culturally appropriate and inclusive of all of our children. In Relationships Education, we are offering children the opportunity to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. Relationships Education helps support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. Our programme is firmly embedded in PSHE and will help young people learn to respect themselves and others whilst changing with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Relationships Education is also addressed through the statutory requirements of the science National Curriculum which we deliver at an age and stage appropriate level. In our school, we aim to:

- enable our pupils to make responsible, informed and healthy decisions about their lives, both now and in the future.
- teach our pupils to respect themselves and others so they can move confidently from childhood through to adolescence and into adulthood.
- provide a supportive learning environment in which pupils can develop their feelings of self-worth and confidence, especially in relation to others.

In order to achieve our aims, we will:

- plan appropriate activities which enable children to deal with the sensitive issues in developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding of Relationships Education (RSE)
- provide accurate information and correct any misunderstandings.
- follow the school's approach to teaching and learning.

Legal requirements and the National Curriculum

Wigginton Primary School has a statutory duty to teach the following as part of the National Curriculum:

Science

Key Stage 1

Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults.

Key Stage 2

- Describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird
- Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals.
- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age.
- Recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents.

EYFS children learn about the concept of male and female and about young animals.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child/children from these aspects of the science curriculum. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the National Curriculum for science includes teaching about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty (DfE, 2013) however they may remove their child from the specific sex education element discussed later.

PSHE

In ongoing PSHE work, the children develop skills to form friendships and think about relationships with others. Our curriculum of PSHE is based on the work of the SCARF programme of learning. Within this, it recommends all PSHE teaching to be based around six units that are developed and built upon in each academic year. These are complemented with whole-school assemblies around these themes:

- Me and my relationships
- Valuing difference
- Keeping safe
- Rights and respect
- Being my best
- Growing and changing

Each strand develops to reflect the children's understanding and needs as they progress through school, considering discussions such as 'what is a family?', 'how do I keep myself safe?' and 'what helps me to form my identity?' Throughout learning, children are also expected to live by our school values:

- Creativity
- Resilience
- Independence
- Enthusiasm
- Respect
- Success

RSE and the relationships that we have are far broader than one set of lessons in UKS2, but rather a secure foundation for the relationships and responsibilities we have to each other throughout our school lives and beyond into adulthood.

Sex Education

Year 6 is an important transitional phase before moving to secondary school and we strive to support our pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. We also believe this to be a safeguarding issue, as children starting secondary school will be mixing with 16-year olds and possibly 18-year olds who will legally be able to have sex - and so, by providing sex education in Year 6, we are laying the foundations to further sex education in secondary school, as well as helping children to identify what sexual intercourse is and its potential consequences (pregnancy), and how to avoid it, should anyone try to coerce them to engage in sexual activity.

The DfE recommends that all primary schools should have a sex education programme, tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. We follow and, as appropriate, adapt the SCARF programme of learning. Within our non-statutory sex education that takes place in Year 6, children will learn about how a baby is conceived, whether through sexual intercourse or IVF. Discussion about condoms is also included in one lesson to help pupils understand that pregnancy can be avoided and does not always have to be a consequence of sexual intercourse. This information builds on content they have previously learnt in the programme about relationships, puberty changes and reproduction; it lays the foundations for their ongoing Relationships and Sex Education in their secondary phase.

We define menstruation, wet dreams and masturbation (all parts of puberty) as falling within Health Education (under the Changing Adolescent Body section) not RSE, and therefore part of the statutory requirements.

Naming parts of the body, including genitalia, comes under statutory Relationships Education, within the Being Safe unit; requirement number 7: 'How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence to do so', It also comes under National Curriculum science where children are required to be able to name the external body parts and so is, again, statutory. However, if we feel that individual pupils or a specific cohort is not ready for this information in the year group it has been suggested within the SCARF curriculum, then we have the flexibility to deliver the lesson in a later year, when we feel it would best meet our pupils' needs.

A range of teaching methods are used, including plenty of discussion. Sex education is usually delivered in mixed-sex groups. This is because, at Wigginton School, we believe that understanding each other leads to greater respect. However, there are occasions where single-sex groups are more appropriate and relevant. SCARF lesson plans are flexible and allow for teachers, who are skilled in adapting curriculum content to meet the needs of the children in their class, to adjust their content in order to meet the learning outcomes.

Our school ensures that the RSE elements of the PSHE education programme are relevant to all pupils; whatever their gender identity. All pupils learn together about all the changes that someone may experience as they go through puberty to help develop empathy and understanding and to reduce incidences of teasing or stigma. This will also ensure any child that identifies as transgender will have access to RSE that is relevant to the puberty they are likely to experience.

"Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education... Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information" - DfE, 2019.

Children often take this time to ask questions and this demands the judgment of the teacher involved and a professional understanding of their class's own experiences and circumstances. To manage and support the answering of sensitive or difficult questions, we make use of an anonymous question box as a distancing technique. Teachers will endeavour to answer questions as honestly as possible but questions they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom or ones which are not age-appropriate and beyond the Key Stage 2 objectives, will not be answered or explored. Where appropriate, teachers will inform parents of any such questions.

Our school acknowledges different ethnic, religious and cultural attitudes, as well as recognising that pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. These different families are acknowledged through our teaching and the use of resources that promote diversity and inclusion in Relationships Education.

Research shows that, on average, about 5% of pupils will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. It is possible that some pupils will also have LGB parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. Our PSHE education acknowledges this through scenarios, in a sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. This helps create a safe environment for all pupils and staff. The public sector equality duty, created under the Equality Act, requires schools and other public authorities to eliminate discrimination and to advance equality in its everyday business, in the design of its policies and curriculum. Schools have a legal responsibility for eliminating discrimination; to do this, schools are required to raise pupils' awareness of diversity and promote respectful relationships with those who are different from them.

Consulting Parents

This policy has been created through the rigorous involvement of all members of school life, taking into account staff meetings, a parents working group and wider parent voice opportunities. It reflects the wide range of beliefs that are held within our school and offers children an opportunity to discuss new and sensitive information in an honest and safe environment.

The school informs parents when lessons about reproduction are to be taught within the science curriculum and offers opportunities for parents to raise any questions or concerns that they may have in advance. Parents

have the right to withdraw their children from those aspects of sex education not included in the National Curriculum coverage of science - alternative work will be set.

SEN and disabilities

Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of children in order for them to have full access to the content of RSE. The lessons are always taught by familiar, trusted and experienced class teachers with support from external agencies (e.g. the school nurse, educational psychologist etc) if further advice is required that is specific to a pupil, class or phase.

Child Protection/Confidentiality

Teachers need to be aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. The staff member will inform the headteacher/DSL in line with the LA procedures for child protection. A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality if concerns exist.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is the responsibility of the SLT. The effectiveness of the RSE programme will be evaluated by assessing children's learning and implementing change if required. This policy document will be available to parents via our website or via requesting a paper copy from the school office.

Signed _____ (Chair of Govs)

Signed _____ (Headteacher)