

Murrow Primary Academy

Relationships Education Policy



Including Sex Education Policy

1. Context

This Relationships Education Policy must be read in conjunction with our PSHCE Policy.

1.1 Relationships Education in our school

We believe Relationships Education is learning about emotional, social and physical aspects of our lives, about ourselves and our relationships. It enables pupils to develop essential life skills for building and maintaining positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships. It equips pupils with information and skills they need to understand about themselves, their peers and people they meet in the wider community. It explores risks, choices, rights, responsibilities and attitudes. It will help pupils to develop skills to keep themselves and others safer, physically and emotionally, both on and off line. Relationships Education enables pupils to explore their own attitudes and those of others respectfully.

Relationships Education also makes a considerable contribution to fulfilling our school's aims, which is to ensure all children leave Murrow Primary Academy prepared for life ahead.

1.2 Context of Wider PSHCE

We deliver Relationships Education as part of our wider provision of Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE), which also includes statutory Health Education.

The aims of Relationships Education are further supported by interventions, extracurricular and enrichment activities we provide. For example, developing as a Healthy School, social skills interventions etc.

1.3 Aims of Relationships Education

Through the delivery of Relationships Education we intend to further our school's aims of providing a curriculum which is relevant to the needs of pupils, both now and in the future. It will enable pupils to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which enhance their personal development and wellbeing. This will have a direct, positive effect on their progress and achievement in school.

All adults in school will work towards achieving these aims for Relationships Education. We seek to enable our children to:

- develop interpersonal and communication skills
- develop positive, personal values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions and behaviour
- respect themselves and others, their views, backgrounds, cultures and experiences
- develop respectful, caring relationships based on mutuality, reciprocity and trust
- develop their ability to keep themselves and others safe, physically and emotionally, both on and off line
- develop their understanding of a variety of families and how families are central to the wellbeing of children
- recognise and avoid coercive and exploitative relationships
- explore relationships in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development
- value, care for and respect their bodies
- build confidence in accessing additional advice and support for themselves and others.

2. Implementing Our Policy

2.1 Inclusion

In relation to those with special educational needs or disability, we ensure our Relationships Education programme provides for those with additional needs. We recognise that those with SEND are often more vulnerable and that we need to ensure that children are supported to develop appropriate strategies and attitudes to keep themselves safer.

We consider:

- their level of vulnerability to coercion and pressure
- their previous experience of negative behaviours in peer or child-adult relationships
- their need to learn and demonstrate appropriate behaviour
- their need to develop self-esteem and positive body image
- the need to involve all staff, including ancillary staff and parents/carers, in policy development, planning and training
- the management of personal care
- clarity about sources of support for pupils.

2.2 Equality

The [Equality Act 2010](#) has special resonance in Relationships Education. Through this area of learning we seek to develop key interpersonal skills such as respect and empathy which enable pupils to understand the rights and responsibilities we all have towards one another.

The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We will ensure that our provision of Relationships Education is not only equally accessible and inclusive for all pupils with protected characteristics, or who have family members with protected characteristics, but also that it reduces discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and encourages good relations between different groups.

In order to ensure that Relationships Education meets the needs of all:

- We will reflect a range of lifestyles and family structures so that all children see themselves and their families reflected back in the lessons.
- We will ensure that the law in relation to, for example, marriage, online behaviours, sexuality, gender and violence are explained in age appropriate ways.
- Where there are different cultural or religious views about families, relationships or behaviours, we will share these to ensure children see their family views represented.
- We will not seek to gain consensus, but will accept and celebrate difference.
- We will, as appropriate, ensure that a variety of views and beliefs are reflected back to pupils.
- In order to ensure that children of all genders can access information they need, we will teach in mixed gender groups wherever possible.
- We will encourage respect and discourage abusive and exploitative relationships.
- We will not ask children to represent the views of a particular religious or cultural group to their peers, unless they choose to do so.

We support children in developing their knowledge about and attitudes towards diversity throughout units of work including:

- Living in the Wider World
- Relationships

2.3 Safeguarding

We understand the importance of high quality Relationships Education as we fulfil our statutory safeguarding duties. Relationship Education enables pupils to understand about mutual, consensual and reciprocated relationships in all

their forms. Whether the children are learning about friendships, families, relationships in school or the wider community, they will be developing essential skills which underpin their ability to recognise abusive relationships. Teaching about 'VIPs' and 'Anti-bullying' enables us to fulfil our statutory duty to prevent 'peer-on-peer' abuse.

In the case of RSE and Personal Safety, we recognise that effective teaching may alert children to what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour (including inappropriate sexual behaviour) and that there is an increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made. RSE and Personal Safety enable us to fulfil our duty to prevent Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). *All staff are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and will report disclosures or concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.*

2.4 Development of the Policy

This policy has been developed in consultation with pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers. The consultation period followed the provision of information about the duties and statutory elements which have to be included in Relationships Education. It has also included gathering views on needs and priorities for the school community.

All views expressed about the policy have been considered. Consultation did not give a veto to individual members of the school community. The final decision on policy and delivery has been made by the school, having listened to the needs and views of the school community.

2.5 Consulting on our Policy

Parents/carers and pupils have been consulted directly through survey. Further consultation with parents/carers and pupils will be carried out when the policy is reviewed, which happens at least every three years.

3. Involving the Whole School Community

3.1 Working with Staff

Teaching Relationships Education can be very rewarding, but we understand that, in order to feel confident, staff need opportunities to develop their own knowledge, skills and attitudes. We recognise that every adult has different personal beliefs and attitudes, but that all teachers must understand and comply with their duties connected with safeguarding, equality and inclusion.

Teachers have a duty to deliver statutory areas of the curriculum and all teachers will be supported to develop their skills in delivering non statutory areas such as sex education. We will discuss relevant issues and staff concerns and, where appropriate, arrange training to enable staff members to feel confident in delivering the various aspects of Relationships Education.

3.2 Engaging with Pupils

We will involve pupils in the evaluation and development of their Relationships Education in ways appropriate to their age. We will seek opportunities to discuss children's views about the content of their PSHCE lessons. (e.g. through School Council and/or pupil voice.)

3.3 Working with Governors

This policy has been developed with governor involvement, so that the governors are able to fulfil their statutory duties.

It is the responsibility of the governors to ensure, through consultation, that the Relationships Education Policy reflects the needs and views of our community.

In order to facilitate this process, the Relationships Education Policy will appear annually on the agenda of one governors' meeting. The policy will be available on the school's website. A link governor for PSHCE (including Relationships Education) will be nominated.

It is the role of governors to ensure that:

- pupils make progress in Relationships Education in line with the expected educational outcomes
- the subject is well led, effectively managed and well planned
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- teaching is delivered in a way which is accessible to all
- clear information is given to parents/carers
- the subject is resourced and taught in a way which enables the school to fulfil statutory requirements.

3.4 Communicating with Parents/carers

Parents/carers are the first educators of their children about relationships, emotions, empathy, respect and growing up. We recognise that many children like to receive information about relationships from their parents/carers in addition to their learning in school. Therefore we seek to work in partnership with parents/carers when planning and delivering Relationships Education. We will encourage this partnership by:

- Sharing details of our curriculum on our website
- Informing parents/carers by class newsletter or leaflet of forthcoming Relationships Education topics
- Providing supportive information about parents' role in Relationships Education
- Inviting parents to discuss their views and concerns about Relationships Education on an informal basis
- Signposting parents/carers to sources of support to help them address the needs of their child or build their own confidence in talking about relationships with their children.

4. Curriculum Organisation

4.1 Relationships Education Curriculum

Our Relationships Education Curriculum (see appendix) is wholly consistent with the DfE statutory requirements for Relationships Education and Health Education (2020), National Curriculum (2014), other DfE and OfSTED guidance. We consider Relationships Education to be a continuous process of learning, which begins before the children enter our school and continues into adulthood. We have planned a curriculum appropriate to each age group with a spiral of progression.

Relationships Education is learning about:

- Families and People who care for me
- Caring Friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online Relationships
- Being Safe

Our PSHCE topic structure does not separate delivery of Relationships Education from Health Education and wider PSHCE. We deliver topics which, taking the lead from children's lived experiences, consider related themes including development of knowledge, skills and attitudes in an integrated way.

Relationships Education will be taught in:

- PSHCE through designated lessons, circle time, focused events, health weeks
- Other curriculum areas, especially Science, English, RE, PE and computing
- Enrichment activities, especially our assembly programme, growth mindset approaches, visits and visitors, social skills groups, involvement in school trips and adventurous activities.

Ground Rules: Relationships Education is taught in a safe, non-judgemental environment where all adults and children are confident that they will be respected. Specific ground rules will be established at the beginning of any Relationships Education work, in addition to those already used in the classroom. They will cover the following areas:

- appropriate use of language
- the asking and answering of personal questions
- strategies for checking or accessing information.

4.2 Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Our topic, RSE, combines elements of Relationships Education (e.g. learning about families, personal safety and emotional wellbeing) with aspects of Health Education (e.g. learning about the spread of illnesses and the changing adolescent body). This combination offers the best location for our provision of non-statutory sex education. Although 'RSE' as a subject is not statutory at primary level, many aspects of our RSE topic are statutory parts of Relationships Education and Health Education. Some elements of our RSE topic are part of the statutory National Curriculum for Science (e.g. the biological aspects of puberty, reproduction and the spread of viruses).

We will ensure that children receive teaching about puberty at Y5 and Y6 in order to prepare them for the physical, emotional and social changes they are approaching or undergoing.

We understand that at times children will benefit from varying methods of delivering the RSE curriculum. For example, we may use single-sex groups or small group teaching where this will help us to meet the needs of particular children more effectively, we will use team teaching where this enables us to best use teacher expertise. We will ensure there are positive educational reasons for each method of delivery.

4.3 Curriculum Materials and Resources

We will primarily use the PSHE Association Programme of Study and the resources recommended within it when planning and delivering Relationships Education. We will avoid a 'resource-led' approach, instead focussing on the needs of the children and our planned learning objectives. We will carefully select resources which meet these objectives. We will evaluate teaching resources thoroughly before using them. We will select resources which:

- are consistent with our curriculum for Relationships Education
- relate to the aims and objectives of this policy
- are suitable to the age, maturity, needs, linguistic proficiency and ability of the children
- are up-to-date in factual content
- are produced by a reputable organisation
- do not show unfair bias e.g. towards a commercial product, religious view point
- avoid racial, gender, sexual, cultural and religious stereotyping and heteronormativity
- conform to the statutory requirements for Relationships Education.

4.4 Safe and Effective Practice

In our school we have a clear Confidentiality Policy, which is shared with staff, pupils and parents/carers. This policy is communicated to parents/carers in the School brochure/website. The policy states that:

- Staff are unable to offer absolute confidentiality.
- We will reassure children that staff will act in their best interests and that this may involve sharing information if the child is at risk of harm.

- Children will be told if information is to be shared (taking special care with very young children or those with significant special needs) and will be offered appropriate support.

Answering Questions: We acknowledge that sensitive and complex issues will arise in Relationships Education, as pupils will naturally ask questions. When spontaneous discussion arises, it will be guided in a way which reflects the stated school aims and curriculum content. As a first principle, we will answer questions relating to the planned curriculum for that age group or below to the whole class. We will answer questions relating to areas beyond the planned curriculum for that age group, in a sensitive and age appropriate way, only to the pupil/s who have asked the question. If a member of staff is uncertain about the answer to a question, or indeed whether they wish to answer it, they will seek guidance from the PSHCE leader/Designated Safeguarding Lead. In some cases the question will reach beyond the planned curriculum and the question will not be answered in school.

When answering questions, we shall ensure that sharing personal information by adults, pupils or their families is discouraged. Where the question indicates the need for pastoral support, the conversation will be deferred to a time outside the teaching session and other colleagues may be involved. Where a question or comment from a pupil in the classroom indicates the possibility of abuse, coercion or exploitation, teachers will pass this information to the DSL in line with the school Safeguarding policy.

4.5 Assessment, Recording, Reporting

Relationships Education will be assessed in a variety of ways, including the use of self-assessment and teacher assessment.

We will also use a class record book to record whole class discussions and group work in PSHCE.

5. Sex Education Policy

5.1 Definition of Sex Education

Following guidance from the DfE, we define Sex Education as learning about 'how a (human) baby is conceived and born'.

This extends the learning about sexual reproduction in 'some plants and animals' required through the Science national curriculum. It also complements the statutory requirement to teach about puberty as part of Science and Health Education, as understanding sexual reproduction in humans enables children to understand the processes of puberty.

5.2 Consultation about Sex Education

We have taken into account the DfE's recommendation that all primary schools have a Sex Education programme and we understand that this is not statutory. We understand that our teaching in sex education must be tailored to the needs and physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.

5.3 Content of Sex Education

The content of our Sex Education programme will be gradually developed in an age appropriate way. The children will not learn about human sexual reproduction until Year 6.

Year 2 will learn the scientific names of male and female body parts - alongside learning in Science that adult animals produce offspring like themselves. (Cats have kittens. Cows have calves etc.)

Year 5 will learn that every human began when a seed from a male and an egg from a female join together. They will not yet learn about the means by which egg and sperm join – alongside learning in Science the changes experienced during puberty.

Year 6 will learn about human sexual reproduction and other ways that eggs and sperm are joined (eg IVF) in age appropriate detail. They will learn about vaginal birth and caesarean section in age appropriate ways, reflecting the experiences of children and families they know.

5.4 Delivery of the Sex Education Curriculum

Sex Education will be delivered through PSHCE by a teacher who knows the needs and natures of the children.

Each year parents/carers will be informed about the content of the curriculum in advance of teaching and will be invited to talk to staff if they have any questions.

Teachers will be offered support to develop their skills and to learn from others where needed.

5.5 Right to be excused from Sex Education

Parents/carers have the right to request that their child be excused from some or all of Sex Education delivered as part of statutory Relationships Education. Before granting any such request the Head Teacher will discuss the request with parents/carers (and if appropriate with the child) to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The educational, social and emotional benefits for the child of being part of the lessons will also be discussed. We will record the discussion and the outcomes.

We will offer support to parents/carers who wish to deliver Sex Education at home.

If a pupil is excused from Sex Education, we will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

The parents/carers will be asked to reconfirm their decision to withdraw their children from Sex Education each time a Sex Education element is planned for their child.

6. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

Monitoring, review and evaluation of the Policy is the responsibility of the PSHCE leader/head teacher. The governing body will ask for information relating to the effectiveness of the policy when it is monitored every year. Information will be gathered from the Head Teacher, the PSHCE Leader parents/carers and pupils to inform judgements about effectiveness.

The policy will be comprehensively reviewed with engagement from members of the school community every three years, or sooner if an issue or incident occurs which warrants it.

7. Appendices

7.1 Linked National Documents

[RSE and Health Education](#)

[Children and Social Work Bill 2017.](#)

[Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st Century](#)'.

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study>