

## Relationship and Sex Education Policy

### 1. Philosophy

At Brookwood Primary School, we greatly value the contribution that the PSHE (Personal, social and health education) curriculum provides for all our learners. We believe that the personal development of our pupils plays a significant role in their ability to lead a happy and healthy life. We believe that Relationship and Sex Education should form a key part of this PSHE curriculum and the PSED (Personal, Social and Emotional Development) curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Relationship and Sex Education is essential in preparing pupils for responsibility, opportunities and experiences in their lives now and in the futures as young adults, adults and parents.

Our school perceives its role to be providing Relationship and Sex Education which offers a platform for parents then to discuss the subject further and more personally in the home environment so that they are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Teachers are in an ideal position to help children understand growth and development alongside the science curriculum, as well as helping the children feel comfortable discussing feelings related to relationships and changes that they will go through before and during puberty. These changes include that of friendships, family dynamics and personal relationships alongside the physical changes associated with growing up and education begins in reception and is continued throughout the school.

In teaching RSE, teachers will be mindful of our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the content of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE). It is through RSE specifically, and PSHE generally, that we raise children's awareness of healthy and unhealthy relationships, contributing to their safety. Specifically, age-appropriate reference is made to female genital mutilation in order that all are made aware that it is forbidden by law (in line with KCSiE).

This policy reflects the DfES 2000 SRE guidance and guidance from the PSHE Association, the Sex Education Forum and the local authority.

### 2. Aims and outcomes

The overall aim of RSE is to foster a positive notion of lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development, including how to look after physical and mental health. It aims to support the development of self-respect and empathy for others and promotes the development of skills and understanding necessary to manage conflict peaceably and learn how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

RSE provides opportunities for pupils to:

- Better understand the nature of human relationships
- Learn about relationships, the importance of communication and assertiveness skills including the values such as respect (for self and others), equality, responsibility, care and compassion
- Reflect upon the importance of stable and loving relationships for family life, including the bringing up of children. This includes marriage and civil partnerships.
- Consider and understand the changes that occur to their bodies, minds and emotions as a consequence of growth from childhood to adulthood
- Reflect upon how to make good, informed and safe choices concerning relationships and healthy lifestyles.

RSE at Brookwood reflects the school's ethos and values, which are in line with the opportunities above. Further to this, RSE supports the school's duty to promote the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness in line with the 2010 Equality Act and the school's safeguarding and child protection protocols.

The school is committed to the provision of RSE to all of its pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family background.

### **3. Teaching and Learning**

At Brookwood Primary School, Relationship and Sex Education is taught through a developmental programme, as part of the PSHE curriculum, where children can build upon their prior learning. For the most part, it will be taught discretely, through PSHE lessons, but it will also be given coverage through the RE curriculum. Relationship and Sex Education is taught within the context of the requirements of the National Curriculum for Science and the non-statutory guidance for PSHE. The scheme of work is structured incorporating the objectives contained within these documents.

Through our Relationship and Sex Education, we recognise the importance of helping children to identify and respond appropriately to feelings and emotions that they may experience. We encourage children to use these to guide their thoughts and actions to help them become confident effective communicators and to form and maintain a happy and healthy lifestyle. Canvassing pupils own attitudes, levels of knowledge and behaviour before embarking on activities ensures the relevance and appropriateness of Relationship and Sex education.

Parents are informed of the objectives and topics covered in PSHE in topic webs and are given information regarding the intention to begin Sex Education linked to puberty and growing up in Year 5 through a letter which contains the specific areas of learning which will take place in the lessons. Parents are encouraged to come in and see the class teacher if they have any concerns or issues with the subject and are welcome to come into school to view sections of the film clips which will be watched by the children.

RSE is normally delivered by the class teaching team in mixed gender groups other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex age groups. The Sex Education linked to puberty and growing up module is delivered in Year 5 by an experienced teacher. Where this is not the class teacher, a member of the leadership team will take the lessons.

PSHE ground rules apply in all PSHE and RSE lessons. We ensure that pupils are able to ask questions anonymously through the use of question boxes. Current medical vocabulary is used throughout the RSE and PSHE curriculum.

RSE, except for the Year 5 module, is taught mainly through circle-time activities with an emphasis on being safe and raising self-esteem. RSE lessons are highly active sessions with role play, card sorting, discussions, etc.

### **4. Resources**

We use a scheme to support the main Year 5 topic: BBC Active Relationship and Sex Education. This includes interactive materials, worksheets and a number of film clips. Opportunities are given for single sex discussions arising from the Relationship and Sex Education when this is considered to be appropriate.

This, and other Relationship and Sex Education resources, reflect the needs, ages and cultural diversity of pupils. They are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure appropriateness. Relationship and Sex Education resources challenge stereotypes and contain non-stereotypical images including different and diverse people

The school also ensures that females (adults and KS2 girls) have access to suitable sanitary disposal facilities and sanitary towels located in the office.

### **5. Parental rights to withdraw their children**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all, or part, of the RSE curriculum, except those parts included within the National Curriculum.

Parents are made aware, through this policy, that the RSE curriculum is essential in supporting the school's statutory duty to:

- Safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children

- Advance the 2010 Equality Act
- Encourage the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- Foster British Values and
- Prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, along with the coverage of the National Curriculum for Science.

The Headteacher meets any parents who ask to withdraw their children from RSE lessons. Experience shows that it is usually part of the Year 5 module which parents request withdrawal from. We make the resources available to parents at this time and explain why the RSE curriculum is important to children's development. Where possible, parents are asked to allow their children to be included for as much as possible of the curriculum, and certainly that part covered by the National Curriculum.

Parents are offered the opportunity for their Year 6 child to join the sessions the following year.

## **6. How Brookwood responds to specific issues related to Relationship and Sex Education**

Conversations with staff, parents and pupils can prove delicate and need to be handled appropriately and sensitively. The following framework applies:

- If in doubt, the conversation may be postponed sensitively in order that it has the best chance of a good outcome.
- The PSHE ground rules must be in place – and a reminder given of these at the start of the conversation. This includes confidentiality, but carefully set within the context of safeguarding.
- Thought should be given to whether discussion is most appropriate on a one-to-one or small group basis.
- There should be sufficient time available to deal with the issue.
- The staff member should have sufficient knowledge and understanding to be able to help. If in doubt, they should seek support.
- Care should be taken to understand the context of the discussion in terms of family, community, faith and cultural issues. When in doubt, the staff member should talk to the Headteacher or DSL.
- Distancing techniques or the use of scenarios may be appropriate.
- The age, maturity and understanding of the person asking the question should determine whether the question is appropriate and the answer must be age appropriate.
- Staff may use the technique of asking the questioner what they think or know first. This will provide a more informed insight into the question.

## **7. Confidentiality**

Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. Staff, however, cannot guarantee unconditional confidentiality. This should be understood by all staff and pupils and embedded in the PSHE ground rules. If a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse.

In these circumstances the teacher will talk to the DSL as a matter of urgency. The headteacher will then forward the matter to the appropriate Authority, usually Social Services and/or the Police. The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy offers further information on this process.

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