

Relationship, Sex and Health education (RSHE) Policy

RSHE is taught as part of our Learning for Life (See separate policy)

From April 2021, Relationships and Health Education is compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. (See appendix 1 for guidance). Sex education is currently not compulsory in primary school, however the DfE continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme that is tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils and ensures that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes adolescence brings, including extending on knowledge of the human lifecycle set out in the National Curriculum for science, to understand how a baby is conceived and born. At Greythorn, we will also offer some non-statutory sex education to children in Year 6 (which parents are able to withdraw their child from).

Aims and Objectives

As a school, we are aware that we need to be mindful of and respectful to a wide variety of faith and cultural beliefs and we will make every attempt to be appropriately sensitive; equally, it is essential that young people still have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. We will not discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics).

At Greythorn Primary School, RSHE enables our children to become healthy, confident and informed individuals who can make responsible choices. Effective RSHE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain positive relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being. It is the responsibility of all staff in school to deliver RSHE at the appropriate level through both direct teaching and the modelling of positive attitudes and of appropriate behaviours and relationships.

The RSHE programme at Greythorn Primary School reflects the school ethos and demonstrates and encourages the following values:

- To develop positive attitudes and respect for others;
- To develop self-respect and values;
- To develop self-confidence and self-esteem, and make informed choices;
- To form positive and appropriate relationships with others;
- To prepare children for growing up;
- To keep children safe.

We acknowledge that all young people deserve the right to honest, open, age-appropriate and factual information to help better form their own beliefs and values, free from bias, judgement or subjective personal beliefs of those who teach them.

Consultation

This policy has been formed using the DfE guidance (**see appendix 2**) and the National Curriculum.

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community with input from

- Members of staff – staff meetings and sharing of documents
- Governors – discussions at governor meetings
- Parents/carers – parents will be encouraged to contribute by responding to a survey and having access to the policies and documents

- Children – pupils contribute to the development of the policy through the circle time discussions etc.

Parents of Y6 children will also be consulted before their child is offered the non-statutory sex education lessons about the content of what will be taught. Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions via Dojo messaging, before deciding whether they want their child to take part in the Y6 sex education lessons.

Curriculum Content for Statutory Relationship and Health Education

By the end of primary, children will have covered the following objectives:

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

Respectful relationships

Pupils should know:

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- the conventions of courtesy and manners
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults

Online relationships

Pupils should know:

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
- how information and data is shared and used online

Being safe

Pupils should know:

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard,
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- where to get advice, for example family, school or other sources

The content set out above covers everything that primary schools should teach about relationships and health, including puberty. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals.

All of our relationship and health education is taught through our Learning for Life lessons, using the SCARF curriculum (please see separate **Learning for Life policy** for more detail).

Curriculum Content for Sex Education

It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. 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. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born.

In line with the SCARF curriculum, we have interpreted this to mean that Sex Education includes puberty, conception, reproduction and birth. Puberty is already statutory under Health Education and National Curriculum Science (no right to withdraw). Birth and reproduction is also included in Science (again no right to withdraw) and so this leaves conception. We have interpreted 'how a baby is conceived' to refer to what happens during sexual intercourse before an egg and sperm meet (reproduction). We therefore include sexual intercourse as well as IVF (and other ways for people to have children) in our Year 6 sex education lesson (non-statutory). This will also be supported by a variety of resources. This is to help children understand how babies are conceived, particularly before they transition to secondary school to support the pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively, as stated by the DfE.

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– 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), should anyone be trying to coerce them to engage in sexual activity. Menstruation/puberty are technically not Sex Education but Health Education, and are therefore statutory (parents cannot withdraw). Naming parts of the body comes under the 'Being Safe' category of Relationships Education, statement number 7: How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence to do so, as well as National Curriculum Science and is again statutory. This is therefore statutory, as it is a pivotal part of our safeguarding teaching.

Teaching and Learning

At Greythorn, our community is diverse and inclusive; our teaching strategies are in accordance with this. We teach RSHE as part of our Learning for Life delivery (see separate policy); the level is appropriate to the age group taught.

Managing Difficult Questions

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. At Greythorn, all staff are aware of the potentially difficult and sensitive issues that are covered in RSHE.

Teachers will adapt their lessons depending on the needs of their class. Both formal and informal RSHE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. More often than not, children have lots of questions that they would like to know the answers to. We believe that, if age appropriate, answering children's questions will mean they are more informed and will address any misconceptions they may have or may get from asking their peers or the internet for answers. In Greythorn, we are very aware that, given ease of access to the

internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. We feel it is important to be open and honest with children where possible to avoid misconceptions or incorrect information from independent research. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the designated person for child protection if they are concerned.

We do encourage parents to talk to their children about what they are learning in school. A letter or Dojo message will be sent out each year, prior to the main unit linked to RSHE being taught (Summer term). However, throughout the year, elements of the RSHE curriculum -for example, naming body parts, keeping safe, appropriate and inappropriate touch, life-cycles- will be taught at different times within other units.

Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Staff are aware that views around RSHE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSHE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect the different opinions of others.

Menstruation

Children who have started their menstrual cycle are given the choice of using either the disabled toilet or their own class toilets. We have sanitary products available in school, if a child has forgotten their own. Menstruation is taught from Year 4 onwards.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

Greythorn Primary School believes that RSHE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation and sexual identity and answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic or transphobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. Please see our anti-bullying policy.

Withdrawal

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory Sex education taught in Year 6 (see curriculum content for sex education for more details). A letter will be sent to parents/carers of Year 6 children before the content is taught. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right will be asked to communicate with the Head Teacher, who will discuss with the parent the benefits of receiving this important education and explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher. If a parent/carer would like to withdraw their child, it will need to be in writing in response to the letter sent out. Parents cannot withdraw their children from the statutory Relationship education or the aspects of sex education that are taught in the statutory National Curriculum Science and Health education.

Confidentiality

As a general rule, a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he will talk to the designated person for child protection. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and given reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

Child Protection

The school has a separate Child Protection Policy. However, the delivery of RSHE in school forms part of the range of measures we use to protect children from the risk of abuse and sexual exploitation. Through the RSHE curriculum, we aim to give children the appropriate language to use and the skills required to understand what constitutes an appropriate relationship. This is supported by our Learning for Life curriculum, which builds children's self-esteem and ability to communicate. Effective RSHE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff are aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns.

Monitoring and Assessment

Time is allowed at the end of lessons to enable children to reflect on what they achieved and experienced by taking part in the activity. In Year 6 Sex education, a question box is used so that children can ask any questions anonymously. Through observing children in lessons and questioning, the class teacher will monitor a child's understanding and progression in RSHE.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to the provision of RSHE to all of its pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. We recognise that at primary school level, particular care and sensitivity is needed in matching teaching to the maturity and needs of the pupils involved. We ensure children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are fully included in RSHE, adapting the curriculum to meet their needs.

Monitoring and Review

The PSHE coordinator has the responsibility for overseeing the quality of the provision of RSHE in school. The coordinator will provide feedback to staff regarding any developments within the curriculum or of any updated resources. Within classes, individual staff will be responsible for monitoring the RSHE development of their children and provision will be made for children who are having difficulty in this area. All staff members and governors can access a copy of the RSHE policy.

Signed:

Chair of Governors: _____ date: _____

Head Teacher: _____ date: _____

Subject co-ordinator: _____ date: _____

Updated in October 2023