

Personal Social Health and Education (including Relationships and Sex Education) Policy

Introduction

At Sefton Park Infant and Junior Schools, we see Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) as an essential element of children's learning. The promotion of children's personal development, including their social development, health and wellbeing is a fundamental aspect of education and underpins all other learning.

Through our school curriculum, environment and ethos, we promote children's emotional wellbeing and self-esteem to help them form and maintain significant and rewarding relationships based on respect for themselves and others, at home, school and in the wider community.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff and parents. We are committed to on-going consultation with families and stakeholders throughout the evolution of our school's curriculum for PHSE (including Relationships and Sex education).

It has been written with reference to the following documents published by the Department for Education (DfE):

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442422/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_and_Health_Education_guidance.pdf)

[Keeping children safe in education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442422/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)

[Equality Act Advice Final.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442422/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)

[SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442422/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

[Mental health and behaviour in schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442422/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools.pdf)

[Preventing and tackling bullying \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442422/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying.pdf)

[Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools Departmental advice for maintained schools](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442422/Promoting_fundamental_British_values_as_part_of_SMSC_in_schools_Departmental_advice_for_maintained_schools.pdf)

[Drug and Alcohol Education \(DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools: Advice for local authorities, Headteachers, school staff and governing bodies, September 2012](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442422/Drug_and_Alcohol_Education_DfE_and_ACPO_drug_advice_for_schools_Advice_for_local_authorities_Headteachers_school_staff_and_governing_bodies_September_2012.pdf)

Statutory Requirements

From September 2020, Relationships Education is compulsory for all primary schools as set out in the DfE Guidance (2019). For all maintained schools there is also a statutory duty to provide Health Education. This includes primary aged children learning about the 'changing adolescent body', included in the expected outcomes for primary Health Education. Effective Relationships Education can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables children and young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

Although the Relationships Education and Health Education is compulsory in all primary schools and parents are unable to withdraw their child from this, sex education is currently not compulsory. However, the Department for Education continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils.

Links to other Policies

- Equalities Policy and Objectives
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Anti-Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Acceptable Use Agreement/Internet Safety

Aims

PSHE is an important and necessary part of pupils' education. Through a planned programme of learning, we aim to provide our pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need in order to manage their lives both now and in the future. As part of a whole school approach, we aim to develop the attributes needed to thrive as individuals, as part of a family and as a confident member of the wider community.

Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contributing fully to the life of their school and communities. In doing so they learn to recognise their own worth, work well with others and become increasingly responsible for their own learning. They reflect on their experiences and understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up.

Our school is committed to serving its community and surrounding areas. We recognise the multi-cultural, multi-faith and ever-changing nature of the United Kingdom, and therefore of our community. We want our children to learn to understand and respect our common humanity, diversity and differences so that they can go on to form effective, fulfilling relationships that are an essential part of life and learning.

The aim of relationships education at our school is to help pupils develop self-respect, confidence and empathy. Pupils will learn about what makes healthy relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in a way that is age appropriate and sensitive to all faiths. This will include online relationships, and how to seek help if they feel unsafe. Teaching will respect the diversity of families in our community.

Curriculum Delivery

Sefton Park Schools uses the PSHE Association to support the effective teaching of Relationships Education and Health Education. The PSHE Association Programme of Study for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education has three strands (Health & Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World).

We seek to provide a safe, secure learning environment for PSHE that enables children and young people to gain accurate knowledge, develop their own values and attitudes, and develop skills to grow into happy confident successful adults. At the beginning of each year, every class sets ground rules that children must follow during PSHE lessons. This creates a safe and supportive learning environment and allows children to feel comfortable and to speak openly and honestly. At Sefton Park Schools we promote the needs and interests of all pupils, irrespective of gender, culture or background and all teachers take into account the children's age, ability and readiness.

PSHE will be provided through weekly discreet curriculum time in Key Stage 1 and 2, assemblies, class discussions/circle time, as and when issues arise, ensuring time is made within the curriculum to meet the needs of the children and through extra curricular activities. These include Mental Health Awareness week, Safer Internet day and Anti-Bullying week. We respect pupils' unique starting points by providing learning that is suitable to their level, taking into account their age and maturity.

Our PSHE Curriculum is outlined in Appendix 1

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Early Years, Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is a prime area of learning, therefore an integral aspect of daily planning, teaching and learning. Planning is child led to reflect the interests of the children and the needs of the school. Children take part in circle time and discuss topics and themes that are at their level. Teachers look at the three core themes (Health & Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World) and take aspects of these to inform their planning. PSED is a fundamental building block in a child's development and underpins the whole curriculum.

Sex Education

The teaching of Sex Education in primary schools remains non-statutory, with the exception

of the elements of sex education contained in the science national curriculum including the main external body parts, the human life cycle (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. Other related topics that fall within the statutory requirements for Health Education, such as puberty and menstrual wellbeing, will be included within PSHE education lessons.

Sex Education is defined as teaching children how human reproduction occurs, including how a baby is conceived. This draws on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the National Curriculum for Science. For the purposes of this policy, we specifically identify any non-statutory Sex Education that falls outside of Science and those related elements (the physical changes associated with puberty) within statutory Health Education.

It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. Therefore, we aim to provide a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. Pupils will be taught about puberty in years 4 and 5. Pupils will be taught about Human Reproduction in years 5 and 6. As well as consulting parents more generally about the school's overall policy, we will provide information about the content of what will be taught. Parents will be welcome to see teaching materials.

Withdrawal from Sex Education Lessons

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education lessons taught as part of the relationships education or PSHE curriculum. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form in Appendix 2 and addressed to the head teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's records so that parents' wishes are on record. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Sensitive issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers will be prepared to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs. Staff are aware that views around PSHE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all PSHE 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 others who may have a different opinion.

Answering children's questions

We are aware that children are likely to have many questions that may occur at any time. Children tend to ask whatever is on their mind. We see this as a positive point and a sign that we have created a safe environment where children feel empowered to feed their natural curiosity and learn about themselves, their bodies and the world around them. However, we acknowledge that some parents may feel uncomfortable about how particular questions may be dealt with in class.

We believe children are better off receiving honest, open answers from safe adults in their lives, rather than it being left to the internet or older children with a smart phone. In the age of information, where children in primary have access to tablets, smart phones and the internet (often unsupervised) it is essential that we help children to recognise they are able to ask questions without judgement rather than searching for answers on the internet.

By tackling the topic in a matter of fact manner, without embarrassment, means that we take the mystic allure out of the topic, making sex no longer the secret taboo. However uncomfortable a proposition that may be, it is far better than the alternative. For children these questions are not rude, they are simply signs of a healthy and natural curiosity. We can stop the topic becoming taboo and embarrassing and removing the stigma before it has had a chance to form.

We believe that if children ask a question they deserve an answer. If ignored they merely build unnecessary barriers, making children think they have done something wrong; they are unlikely to ask again, and are instead left to seek their answers from less reliable or child friendly sources, due to shame. However uncomfortable the question may be, the thought is already in their head. It is much better we as safe adults take responsibility and tackle the question safely and age appropriately.

Staff have received training as to how to deal with children's questions age appropriately.

This will be done consistently across the school as follows:

Children will be praised for asking questions. We wish to encourage children to seek answers from safe adults. If a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. However, as with any other subject, there may occasionally, be the need to differentiate depending on children's knowledge and experience.

Some children may need additional information or support compared to others. If a child asks a question that is not necessarily suitable for the entire class, we will respond, by e.g saying: "that is a fantastic question, hold that thought, and I will come and talk to you and answer your question in a minute when everyone else is working."

If the member of staff doesn't have an answer or doesn't know, they will say so. There is no shame in not knowing the answer but the member of staff should make an effort to help the child to find the answer later. If the member of staff is not sure how best to answer a particularly tricky question, our suggested response is: "That is a brilliant question, I would like to give you an equally brilliant answer, so let me have a think about it and once I know the best way to explain it clearly, I will come back to you." This will allow teaching staff time to think, seek help, advice or support from colleagues, or to speak to Senior Leaders.

If a child asks a question we know parents may be uncomfortable with, staff may choose to delay answering the question (as above) until they have spoken to the parent/carer if possible and talk through their response.

Teachers will answer questions, openly, honestly, scientifically and factually without relying on their own personal beliefs. Teachers will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their students that could make either parties vulnerable.

Teaching and learning strategies utilised across the PSHE curriculum

Using 'distancing' techniques such as role play, case studies, videos etc. to depersonalise sensitive issues.

Anonymous question boxes. These can help children to have the confidence to ask sensitive questions, and they provide an opportunity for teachers to pre-empt questions that might not be age appropriate or that might raise safeguarding or child protection concerns.

It will be emphasised to children that any voluntary sharing of information should be anonymous (for example "someone I know..." rather than "I" or naming names). Should personal questions be asked of either children or staff, children will be reminded that the ground rules for PSHE prohibit personal questions. Although staff may draw on their personal experiences to answer certain questions, this should always be depersonalised and discussed in third person rather than first person. All staff teaching PSHE will be supported and advised by the PSHE lead and senior leadership team on these matters as required.

External agencies and visitors

External agencies can be invited to support the delivery of all aspects of PSHE. These may include: the school nurse, the NSPCC and the police. The input of visitors is monitored and evaluated by staff. This evaluation informs future planning.

Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive PSHE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect.

Schools have a legal duty to promote equality (Equality Act, 2010) and to combat bullying (Education Act, 2006) (which includes homophobic, sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying) "Schools should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours. School pastoral and behaviour policies should support all pupils." (DfE, 2019)

Monitoring and Evaluation

Class teachers assess pupils' understanding and progress through formative and summative processes. These may include pre- and post-topic mind maps, drawings, task outcomes, questioning, quotes from children and observation.

The PSHE Lead, supported by SLT is responsible for monitoring the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching and learning. The subject leader will monitor teaching and learning in order to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the school and indicate areas for improvement. The subject leader will regularly evaluate the scheme of work to ensure that the needs of the pupils are being met and that there is progression and continuity of learning through the school. The subject leader will support colleagues in the teaching of PSHE by giving them information about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in school.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Governing Body who will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

Policy ratified: 26/5/21 Review date: May 2023