RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

Statement of intent

This policy sets out our school's approach to statutory Relationships and Health Education and non-statutory Sex Education. We have based our school's relationships and sex education policy on the statutory guidance document "Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education"(DfE,2019) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships_Education__Relationships_and_Sex_Education__RSE__and_Health_Education.pdf and the PSHE Association's supplementary guidance "Writing your school's relationships and sex education (RSE) policy" (PSHE Association, September 2018).

Department for Education guidance states that from September 2020, all primary schools must teach Relationships and Health 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.

Within the statutory guidance document for RSE and Health Education, the DfE also encourages schools to deliver age-appropriate sex education if they feel their pupils need this information:

> "It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement….
>
> "It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department continues to recommend therefore 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 all children 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"

DEFINITIONS

Within this policy, as in the DfE guidance, **Relationships Education** is defined as teaching about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. Our definition of Relationships Education includes all of those elements defined within this statutory topic – these are detailed below in the 'RSHE Curriculum' section.

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.

RATIONALE AND ETHOS

At The Free School Norwich, RSHE is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school as reflected in our whole school: Strive, Thrive, Achieve. Our aim is to create a safe, positive and stimulating environment in which all members of the school community learn and grow in confidence, knowledge and skills.

Through our PSHE programme we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens.

In providing children with an understanding of healthy and respectful relationships and appropriate boundaries, we consider effective RSHE to be a fundamental part of our approach to supporting pupils to grow into confident, caring, responsible and respectful young citizens. RSHE is lifelong learning about personal, physical, moral and emotional development. It is set in the context of clear values about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life. It should teach children and young people to develop and form positive values, attitudes, personal and social skills, and increase their knowledge and understanding of how to make informed decisions and life choices.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Section 80A of the Education Act 2002
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2013) 'Science programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2'
  DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policy

- Behaviour Policy
- Pupil Exclusions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Pupil Equality, Diversity and Accessibility Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy and IT Acceptable Use Agreement
- Staff Code of Conduct

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the curriculum is well led, effectively managed and well planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Providing clear information for parents on subject content and their rights to request that their children are withdrawn.
- Making sure the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- Creating and keeping up-to-date a separate written statement of this policy and ensuring the statement is published on the school's website and provided free of charge to anyone who requests it.

The Principal is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects.
- Ensuring that parents are fully informed of this policy.
- Reviewing requests from parents to withdraw their children from the subjects.
- Discussing requests for withdrawal with parents.
- Organising alternative education for pupils, where necessary, that is appropriate and purposeful.
- Reporting to the Trustee Board on the effectiveness of this policy.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The RSHE subject leader is responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of the subjects.
- Ensuring the subjects are age-appropriate and high-quality.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the subjects.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to the relationships, and health curriculum.
- Ensuring the relationships and health curriculum, as well as any optional sex education, is inclusive and accessible for all pupils.
- Working with other subject leaders to ensure the relationships and health curriculum complements, but does not duplicate, the content covered in the national curriculum.

- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the Principal.
- Liaising with the SENDCO to identify and respond to individual needs of pupils with SEND.

Parents and Carers are responsible for:

As a school we are aware that the primary responsibility for providing children's RSHE lies with parents and carers. We recognise the need to work with parents and carers to ensure a shared understanding of RSHE and to deliver an effective programme that meets the needs of our pupils.

ORGANISATION OF THE CURRICULUM

Every primary school is required to deliver statutory relationships education and health education. The delivery of the relationships education and of health education coincide with one another and will be delivered as part of the school's PSHE curriculum.

For the purpose of this policy:

- "**Relationships education**" is defined as teaching pupils about healthy, respectful relationships, focussing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online.
- "**Sex education**" is defined as teaching pupils about developing healthy sexuality, and will cover issues, beyond those covered in the science and health curricula, that will be determined in response to the needs of the relevant cohort.

The relationships and health curriculum takes into account the views of teachers, pupils and parents. The school has organised a curriculum that is appropriate for the age and developmental stages of pupils within each year group. When organising the curriculum, the religious backgrounds of all pupils will be considered, so that the topics that are covered are taught appropriately.

We are dedicated to ensuring our curriculum meets the needs of the whole-school community; therefore, the curriculum is informed by issues in the school and wider community to ensure it is tailored to pupils' needs. For example, if there were to be a local prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections, our curriculum would be tailored to address this issue.

STATUTORY RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

As part of our PSHE/Relationships Education programme of study, children will be taught what a relationship is; the different types of relationships they might have e.g. with family members, friends, and other adults; the importance of healthy and secure relationships to wellbeing; what constitutes a healthy relationship, in person and online; how to set and observe appropriate boundaries in relationships; how to recognise when a situation is unsafe; strategies for dealing with situations that they find uncomfortable or that are unsafe; and sources of help and advice.

Our RSHE Schemes of Learning have the following overarching themes:

Be Yourself

Digital Wellbeing

TEAM

VIPS

Progression of themes and language used to support delivery of these units can be found here:

http://www.freeschoolnorwich.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/FSN-Relationships-Sex-and-Health-Education-Curriculum-Progression-Map.pdf

More detailed objectives for statutory Relationships Education for each year group are laid out in the PSHE Curriculum Overview which can be found here:

http://www.freeschoolnorwich.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/FSN-Personal-Social-Health-and-Economic-Education-Curriculum-Overview.pdf

NON-STATUTORY SEX EDUCATION

The DfE guidance 2019 recommends that all primary schools have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of pupils, and this should include how a baby is conceived and born. Although sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, we believe children should understand the facts about human reproduction before they leave primary school. We therefore provide some non-statutory age appropriate sex education in all year groups.

We believe that teaching this additional content to pupils will ensure that they are better prepared for transition to secondary school and also support their personal and social development as the grow into young adults.

As is legally prescribed, parents have a right to withdraw their children from these additional non-statutory sex education lessons – please see the relevant section within this policy in regard to this process.

Progression of themes and language used to support delivery of these units can be found here:

http://www.freeschoolnorwich.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/FSN-Relationships-Sex-and-Health-Education-Curriculum-Progression-Map.pdf

Curriculum Overview for Sex Education is outlined here:

More detailed objectives for statutory Relationships and Health Education for each year group are laid out in the PSHE Curriculum Overview which can be found here:

http://www.freeschoolnorwich.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/FSN-Personal-Social-Health-and-Economic-Education-Curriculum-Overview.pdf

Sex Education units are delivered with in the Summer term, Relationships and Health Education objectives are woven throughout the school year as outlined within the PSHE Curriculum Overview above.

EYFS:

Elements of RSHE are implemented within the 3 Prime Areas of Learning, key themes are modelled and discreetly taught (as outlined below), using tools such as role play, Circle Time and online resources such as NSPCC Pants.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Pupils are taught in a graduated objective and play led approach about:

Making Relationships

To play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

Self-confidence and self-awareness

Children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.

Managing feelings and behaviour

Children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

CURRICULUM LINKS

The school seeks opportunities to draw links between relationships and health education and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning. Relationships and sex education will be linked to the following subjects in particular:

- **Science –** pupils learn about the main external parts of the body and changes to the body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty.
- **Computing**– pupils learn about e-safety, including how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private and how to access help and support.
- **PE** – pupils explore various physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and understand how exercise can lead to healthier lifestyles.
- **PSHE** – pupils learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.

CONSULTATION WITH PARENTS

The Free School Norwich understands the important role parents play in enhancing their children's understanding of relationships and health. Similarly, we also understand how important parents' views are in shaping the curriculum. This will include providing parents with frequent opportunities to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to relationships and health education.

We will consult closely with parents when reviewing the content of the school's relationships and health education curriculum and will be given regular opportunities to voice their opinions and concerns. The school will use the views of parents to inform decisions made about the curriculum content and delivery; however, parents will not be granted a 'veto' on curriculum content, and all final decisions will be the school's to make.

Parents are provided with the following information:

- The content of the RSHE curriculum

- The delivery of the relationships and sex curriculum, including what is taught in each year group
- The legalities surrounding withdrawing their child from the subjects
- The resources that will be used to support the curriculum

We aim to build positive relationships with parents by inviting them into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help parents in managing conversations with their children on the issues covered by the curriculum. Parents are also consulted in the review of this policy and are encouraged to provide their views at any time.

RECORDING AND ASSESSMENT

Pupils work will be recorded in class floor books and on Tapestry. They will have the opportunity to reflect on their learning within lessons and at the end of each unit. In addition to this, teachers will assess through informal methods, such as observations and class or group discussions. Observations may have a particular focus; e.g. children's listening skills, empathy, ability to respond to and reflect on different levels of questioning. Elements of RSHE that occur in the Science or Computing curriculum will be assessed through recorded work to establish age related expectations of knowledge and understanding.

RESOURCES

At The Free School Norwich we use the Scheme of Work and resources in line with the PSHE Association programmes of study which are periodically updated to ensure it remains relevant and engaging to children and meets all statutory requirements of PSHE. Class teachers review the planning and resources for each lesson to ensure they are fully relevant and accessible to the needs of children in their classes and tailor them if necessary. Additional resources may be used if considered appropriate.

SAFEGUARDING

In providing children with an understanding of healthy relationships and appropriate boundaries, we consider RSHE to be an important part of our school's approach to safeguarding. Teachers are aware that effective RSHE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Teachers will take these matters seriously and speak to the child away from the class as a matter of priority. Teachers will draw their concerns to the attention of the DSLs within the school.

We occasionally engage the expertise of other appropriate external partners to work with us to provide advice and support to children with regard to RSHE and Health Education. Such visits should be arranged through the PSHE Lead and with the approval of senior leaders. These sessions are in addition to, and intended to complement, our existing RSHE provision. Where external partners are involved, teachers will have discussed and shared the planning and content of the sessions with visitors in advance. A class teacher will always be present and responsible for classroom management. Visitors supporting the delivery of RSHE will follow the agreed ground rules and the protocols set out above regarding any safeguarding or child protection concerns.

INCLUSIVITY SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Our pupils have different needs based on their emotional and physical development, life experiences, and learning differences, but we aim to ensure that all pupils are properly included in RSHE. Teachers will plan and deliver work in a variety of ways, in order to meet the needs of individual pupils with SEND or learning differences. We focus on activities that increase a pupil's assertiveness, communication and relationship skills, their self-esteem and understanding.

EQUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

The school understands its responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010, specifically that it must not unlawfully discriminate against any pupil because of their protected characteristics. These include:

- Age
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Asexuality
- Non-Binary Pupils
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to promote accessibility and inclusivity of the curriculum. The school will ensure that relationships and sex education programme is inclusive, and caters to the needs, of pupils with SEND or other support needs, such as those with Social, Emotional or Mental Health needs.

Teachers will understand that they may need to adapt their planning of work and teaching methods in order to appropriately deliver the programme to pupils with SEND or other support needs.

Provisions under the Equality Act 2010 allow our school to take positive action, where it can be evidenced to be proportionate, to respond to particular disadvantages affecting a group because of a protected characteristic. For example, we could consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence of sexual harassment.

When deciding whether support is necessary to support pupils with a particular protected characteristic, we will consider our pupils' needs, including the gender and age range of our pupils.

In order to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between all pupils, the school implements a robust Behaviour Policy, as well as a Safeguarding Policy, which sets out expectations of pupils.

The school understands that relationships and sex education may include topics which are triggers for teaching staff, and could relate to historic, recent, or current trauma. If this is the

case, the school encourages staff to approach their line manager or a Dedigated Safeguarding Lead to discuss this.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/PARENTAL RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary providers of RSHE for their children. Our RSHE curriculum is designed to support and complement this. We aim to build a positive and supportive relationship with parents and carers through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this we will:

- Inform parents about the school's RSHE policy and practice;
- Provide opportunities to view any videos, lesson plans and resources used in the RSHE programme;
- Answer any questions that parents may have about RSHE for their child;
- Take seriously any issues or concerns that parents raise.

We believe that all of the content within our school's PSHE curriculum, including RSHE, is of the utmost importance and relevance to all pupils. However, parents have the legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all non-statutory sex education other than that which is part of the National Curriculum for Science. Please note there is no parental right of withdrawal from Relationships Education or Health Education content within the school curriculum, or from any statutory sex education that forms part of the National Curriculum for Science. These are statutory requirements which the DfE mandates schools to teach; please see the statutory document if further information is required. We will inform parents of the right to withdraw by letter in the first part of Summer Term in advance of non-statutory sex education lessons being taught.

Parents and carers who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education should talk with the class teacher, the PSHE coordinator or the Principal who will explore any concerns and discuss resources being used. If parents still wish to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education lessons, this request will be recorded, and suitable alternative arrangements made for pupils during relevant lessons. The issue of withdrawal will be handled as sensitively as possible. Parents should also understand that the decision to remove their child from these lessons means that they themselves will assume responsibility for talking to their children about any related sex education themes covered outside of National Curriculum Science.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Trustee board is responsible for approving this policy.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the RSHE subject leader and Principal. The next scheduled review date for this policy is date. This policy will also be reviewed in light of any changes to statutory guidance, feedback from parents, staff or pupils, and issues in the school or local area that may need addressing.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff, parents and, where necessary, pupils.

LOCATION AND DISSEMINATION

Copies of this policy are held by the Principal and PSHE co-ordinator. Further copies are available in the staff policy folder on OneDrive; on the school website and from the school office on request from parents.

STAFF SUPPORT AND TRAINING

The Free School Norwich believes in the importance of appropriate staff training to enable staff to deliver effective RSHE. The PSHE co-ordinator will access courses or INSET opportunities to assist staff involved in the delivery of RSHE in accordance with the School Improvement Plan.

Principal: Darren Webster
Chair of Trustees: Julia Virgoe
Policy approved: March 2025
Policy Review Date: March 2026