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# FEDERATION OF PENNY ACRES AND WIGLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## RSE POLICY

## **RSE Policy**

The focus in The Federation of Wigley and Penny Acres Primary Schools is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils should be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy.

Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.

Respect for others is taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

From the beginning, teachers talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts enables pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This also helps them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, our teachers address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. We include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents and carers amongst other structures.) Care is taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; for example, looked after children or young carers.

A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as 'virtues') in the individual. In a school wide context which encourages the development and practice of resilience and other attributes, this includes character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks.

Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils should develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice.

Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.

Through Relationships Education (and RSE), we teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This is delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online.

Pupils know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages, we balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

### **By the end of primary**

#### **Families and people who care for me**

Pupils 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 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 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 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 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.

## **Managing difficult questions**

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. In such situations, teachers will liaise with parents/carers as given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.

Meeting these objectives requires a graduated, age-appropriate programme of Relationships Education. Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods take account of these differences (including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. We consider what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting, as teachers may require support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class.

## **Sex education (Primary)**

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools and the content set out in this guidance therefore focuses on Relationships Education.

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.

It is important to us 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 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.

Primary schools that choose to teach sex education must allow parents a right to withdraw their child from all or parts of the RSE curriculum.

### **Menstruation**

Children learn about menstruation as part of the RSE 2-year cycle. All children learn about menstruation although the girls will have an additional session to review sanitary products and ask questions. We believe it is important that both boys and girls understand about the development of each sex through puberty. This is adjusted to the needs of each year group and it is possible that issues of gender and identity is discussed. We recognise that children develop at different rates so additional sessions may be added at any part of the year, to meet the specific needs of the children. Girls are aware of who they can approach to ask questions about menstruation, along with where to find sanitary wear and how to dispose of this correctly. An open dialogue between children and parents is encouraged, alongside parents informing the school of any changes at home.

### **Assessment in RSE**

We use a baseline assessment to help inform our teaching. Please see the PSHE policy for additional ways to inform assessment.

### **How RSE is provided.**

1. Within the taught, age appropriate, RSE programme within PSHE & Science managed by the RSE Co-ordinator.
2. Through other curriculum areas delivering aspects ( eg Drama, English/Literacy etc.)
3. Assemblies
4. Pastoral support for pupils who experience difficulties (please see Confidentiality Policy).
5. By the provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books.
6. Delivery in response to incidents.

## Teaching Methods & Resources

Continuity and progression will be generated through the adoption of a whole school approach to the planning and delivery of clearly defined and progressive learning objectives covering knowledge, skills and understanding.

RSE is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that pupils are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. For example:

- Nobody (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- In most cases the correct names for body parts will be used.
- The meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Active learning methods, which involve children's full participation, will be used.

RSE takes place within single gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant, with the pupils' usual class teacher.

Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to pupils.

In most cases teachers will attempt to answer children's questions and concerns in a sensitive, age and development appropriate manner. Individual teachers will use their skill and discretion in these situations and if necessary refer to the PSHE/Citizenship Co-ordinator for advice and support.

Teachers will also follow the following guidance:

- Teachers will establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting. The ground rules will be discussed at the start of each lesson to reinforce the behaviour expected.
- If a child's question is inappropriate to address with the whole class the teacher should acknowledge the question and attend to it later on an individual basis.
- If a question is too personal the teacher should remind the pupils of the ground rules.
- Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way which encourages thoughtful participation.
- Pupils may have opportunities to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box. The teacher will have time to prepare answers to questions before the next session, and can choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate to address in whole class lessons.
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse the Headteacher should be informed and the usual child protection procedures followed.

## Equal Opportunities

Children may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all pupils should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this the school's approach to RSE will take account of:

- **The needs of boys as well as girls** Girls tend to have a greater access to RSE than boys, both through the media (particularly magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.
- **Ethnic and cultural diversity** Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will consult pupils and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.
- **Varying home backgrounds** We recognise that our pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.
- **Sexuality** On average, about 10% of our pupils will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or trans-gender (GLBT). Some pupils may have GLBT parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our pupils will meet and work with GLBT people. Our approach to RSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall actively tackle homophobic bullying.
- **Special educational needs** We shall take account of the fact that some pupils may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular RSE needs.

## Parental concerns and withdrawal of pupils

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'sex education' lessons. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of RSE that are taught in National Curriculum Science or where RSE issues arise incidentally in other subject areas.

We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RSE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision.

Permission will be gained from parents via a letter.



## **Personnel**

There is an RSE co-ordinator of sufficient status & training. RSE is part of the Science and PSHE co-ordinator's responsibilities.

The RSE co-ordinators are Lynsey Gregory and Sally Eyre.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The programme is regularly evaluated by the RSE co-ordinators. The views of pupils and teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis.

## **Policy Development & Review**

This policy document was produced in consultation with the entire school community, including pupils, parents, school staff, Governors, school community nurse and local Healthy School Standards representative.

This document is freely available to the entire school community.

It will be reviewed regularly.