

Northgate Primary School



Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Approved by:
Northgate Primary
Governing Body

Last reviewed on: March 2026

Next review due by: March 2028

Description of the School

Northgate Primary School is a large primary school which caters for children from 4 – 11 years of age (Year R to Year 6). Each class has a wide range of abilities. We have pupils with Special Educational Needs and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

This policy has been written by the PSHCE team.

Statutory Requirement

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. At Northgate Primary School we teach Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) as set out in this policy.

What is Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)?

The DfES Guidance (2000) offered this definition: "It is the lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity."

At Northgate, we focus upon the teaching of relationships and health for all of our pupils. This involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, diversity, race and personal identity. It also focuses on learning about keeping ourselves safe. As children develop their own personal identities, they also develop an awareness and respect for other people's identities: recognising that individuals and families may differ from one another. As part of relationship and health education it is important children learn how to keep themselves safe and how and when to make age-appropriate decisions about their own lives. In upper KS2 pupils begin to learn about how their bodies and emotions change during puberty and how relationships can become sexual. This is planned carefully with the age group in mind and is outlined in more detail below.

What is the aim of Relationship, Sex and Health Education?

The aim of Relationship, Sex and Health Education is to help and support children through their physical, emotional and moral development. Children will learn to respect themselves and others and move with a greater confidence from childhood through adolescence. We intend to provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place and teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

Pupils will develop their knowledge and understanding of:

- Growth and development and human reproduction including preparing for puberty, and giving them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene (this is linked to the Science Curriculum)
- Roles and responsibilities in personal relationships and what a positive relationship looks like
- The importance of moral responsibility as a good citizen

Through these lessons, pupils will also develop the skills of:

- Communication
- Decision making
- Self-awareness, self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Positive attitudes as well as valuing and respecting differences in opinions
- Personal responsibility for one's actions
- Exploring values and attitudes related to issues of sexuality and relationships
- Knowing where to get confidential advice and support

We endeavour for our RSHE to link to our school's ethos of inclusivity and our desire for all children to live healthy lives. It is developed so our children will learn life skills for the future and we will create a safe and secure environment where children will learn to recognise and respond to dangers. We also wish for Northgate's RSHE to relate to our school values of Curiosity, Ambition, Resilience, Empathy and Respect, which also link to Northgate's Charter which is to be kind to everyone, listen the first time, take care of the school environment, always try your best and to follow the school values.

The Curriculum Objectives for Relationship, Sex and Health Education

At Northgate Primary School, RSHE is taught at a level appropriate to the age of the children incorporating relevant aspects of the non-statutory framework for PSHCE, E4S, the PSHE Association and the National Curriculum for Science.

When teaching Relationship, Sex and Health Education, teachers will refer to West Sussex Guidance using E4S (Education for Safeguarding).

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with pupils, parents, staff and governors, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of our pupils and our school. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

Relationship education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- families and people who care for me
- caring friendships
- respectful relationships (including online)

- values and responsibility
- being safe (including online)

Primary sex education includes:

- preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- how a baby is conceived and born

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Our PSHCE lessons do not just cover relationships and health education. It is a wide and varied curriculum covering emotional and mental wellbeing; citizenship and community (including the importance of British values); keeping ourselves safe in an ever-changing digital world and developing an understanding of the money system and employment. It also reflects the World our children are growing up in as well as current affairs and being part of a Global family.

Our PSHCE curriculum coverage is as follows:

Nursery and Reception

Growth mindset and new beginnings.

What makes me special?

How do I look after myself?

What is a healthy choice?

How do I make friends?

How do I solve problems?

Year 1

Growth Mindset and New Beginnings

What is special about me?

Who is special to us?

What helps us to stay healthy?

How can we look after each other and the world?

What is the same and what is different about us? (including 'body privacy' and naming body parts, including sex organs of penis and vagina)

Who helps us to stay safe? ('safe adults' and NSPCC- Let's talk PANTS)

Year 2

Growth mindset and new beginnings.

How do we recognise our feelings?

What can we do with money?

What makes a good friend?

What helps us grow and stay healthy?

What jobs do people do?

What helps us to stay safe in our home and on the road?

Year 3

Growth Mindset and new beginnings.

How can we be a good friend?

What is a stereotype? -

What makes a community?

Why should we eat well and look after our teeth?

What keeps us safe when we are out and about and online?

What are families like?

Year 4

Growth Mindset and new beginnings.

What strengths, skills and interests do we have?

How can we manage our feelings?

How do we treat each other with respect?

How can our rights and responsibilities?

How can we manage risk in different places?

How can we grow and change? – mental health, exercise and hygiene

Year 5

Growth Mindset and new beginnings.

What makes up a person's identity? /Is it true that everyone is unique and everyone is equal? (race)

How can drugs common to everyday life affect health?

How can we help in an accident or emergency?

What decisions can people make with money?

How can friends communicate safely?

How can we grow and change – puberty? (Including: Locating and name the parts of the body including sex organs).

Year 6

Growth Mindset and new beginnings.

How do I see myself and how do other people see me?

How can the media influence people?

Whose responsibility is it to care for the environment?

What jobs could I do?

What makes a family? – RSE

What will change as we become more independent? – transition

The Content of Relationship, Sex and Health Education

Our Relationship, Sex and Health Education programme is age appropriate and teachers will take into account the need for whole class teaching, smaller group work or one-to-one discussions. It is taught as part of our PSHCE curriculum (see above) and in most years, is focused on the relationships that children build with other people.

Early Years/Foundation Stage

No formal sex education is taught, but pupils will learn about body parts and begin to develop a vocabulary to enable them to express feelings. As part of the Foundation Stage, children will learn about the concept of male and female and about young animals. In ongoing PSHCE work, they develop skills to form friendships and think about relationships with others.

Key Stage 1

No formal sex education programme will be taught during KS1. The children's knowledge and understanding of the human body will be developed through Science and PSHCE lessons. As part of the science curriculum, children have to learn about human body parts and growth. They also learn that humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults.

Scientific vocabulary that will be taught in KS1 includes; vulva, vagina, penis and testicles. This language is taught as part of the science curriculum and also as part of the PSHCE curriculum when children learn about keeping their bodies safe.

Children also use NSPCC resources, including Pantasaurus and 'Let's talk PANTS' to reinforce these safety messages.

PSHCE based work will develop on roles within a family and friendships.

- To recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity.
- Identify and share their feelings with one another and will identify who they are able to talk to and trust (safe adults).

Key Stage 2

In Year 3, children will learn about different relationships with friends and families. They will develop their knowledge and understanding of managing changing feelings and how families change. They will learn about how families can be structured in different ways.

As part of their work on keeping safe, they will revisit 'safe adults' and 'body privacy' using the NSPCC Pants resources as part of their learning.

In Year 4, children learn about how to manage their feelings, how to treat each other's with respect and how their choices impact others in relationships. They spend time learning about how their mental and physical health are both vital and the importance of good hygiene as they grow.

In Year 5, the Science curriculum expectations are for children to learn about the lifecycles of plants, animals and humans. They learn about reproduction of plants and some animals. Alongside the scientific teachings, pupils will be taught about the physical and emotional changes that will happen when approaching and during puberty. They will consider how these body changes impact on their wellbeing and their hygiene. Vocabulary that will be taught in year 5 includes; menstruation, erections, genitals and pubic hair.

They will continue to develop their understanding of the rights they have over their body.

In Year 6, children are taught about reproduction in humans from the Science Curriculum. They will learn to identify the external genitalia and internal reproductive organs in males and females and be taught how the process of puberty relates to human reproduction. As part of the human life cycle, they will learn how babies are conceived and born.

As part of class discussions, learning will also highlight how people love and care for one another and that people may be attracted to someone emotionally, as friends, romantically and physically. Drawing on their previous learning about emotions from year 4, children will discuss romantic emotions and how someone may be attracted to someone of the same sex or different sex to them and how relationships do not all look the same.

In addition to this, all children in Key Stage 2 will learn about values and attitudes associated with relationships. They will learn to express their opinions about relationships and bullying and to listen to and support others, including respecting other people's viewpoints and beliefs. They will understand how stereotypes and prejudice can cause discrimination and will explore negative role models and their impact. They will learn to recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves and try to balance the stresses in life in order to promote their own mental health and wellbeing of others.

What do we do when a child asks challenging questions?

When a pupil asks a question, they will be answered truthfully and sensitively in an age-appropriate way. In some instances, children will be encouraged to ask their parents/carers the question. As a school, we will only answer questions that are based on the teachings covered above. Any questions that are outside of this learning will be directed to the parents of that child.

Teaching Methods

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health, citizenship and economic (PSHCE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education. A variety of teaching methods will be used, for example: discussion, video, outside speakers. The teaching strategies employed should enable pupils to develop and practice their skills of negotiation, decision-making, assertion, research, problem solving and collaboration. Pupils should be given a range of opportunities to explore and develop their own and other's prejudices, engaging in discussion, and challenging stereotypes. It may be appropriate to include occasions when single sex groups have the opportunity to explore questions and queries.

Teachers may use other resources alongside these to help and encourage the children develop their knowledge and understanding, adapting the materials to suit their children's specific needs. A whole range of teaching approaches will be used which will allow children to learn in a caring and sensitive way. Teachers are aware of religious, cultural and family values and will ensure that all children's backgrounds and experiences are recognised and valued.

It is important for teachers to create an atmosphere in which pupils:

- Feel comfortable and trusted
- Feel able to contribute
- Can use language as a tool of expression
- Feel supported
- Support each other
- Express their own feelings

Staffing

The teaching of Relationship, Sex and Health Education will generally be carried out by the class teacher or another member of the year group team. They may be supported in this by the school nurse or other external visitors, who will be aware of and will work within the policy. RSHE will be delivered in a sensitive way and positive attitudes modelled. RSHE needs to respond to the needs of individuals with development and progress monitored. Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE and must respond appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE.

Role of the Subject Leaders

The role of the subject leaders is to keep up to date with current practices, to support whole staff through Inset, planning, assessment, regular monitoring and resources. Training and support for members of staff will be carried out as appropriate.

Assessment, monitoring and reviewing the Sex and Relationship Education teaching

Assessment and monitoring are used as directed in the School Development Plan. Times are set aside for the Subject Leaders to monitor the subject through planning scrutiny, learning walks and pupil conferencing/pupil voice.

Specific Issues

Dealing with Inappropriate Questions

If a pupil asks a question which is seen as inappropriate, they will be told they can have an answer to the question in a one-to-one situation later that day or that they should ask their parents (this depends on the nature of the questions for instance it may be appropriate to tell the pupil to ask their parents if the question is very explicit in sexual content). If teachers are concerned about the nature of the questions, they will raise it with parents.

If a pupil is using sexually explicit/inappropriate language.

Whilst we encourage pupils to discuss their knowledge, there are times when pupils may use language that is sexually explicit and inappropriate in a classroom. At this time, the pupil will be reminded of the expectations of language and the behaviour that has been agreed at the beginning of the unit of learning. Such instances will be recorded and discussed with parents and with a member of the Senior Management Team. The Headteacher will decide whether any further action or follow up is required.

Confidentiality

If a pupil wishes to talk about their sexuality to an adult in the school, they should be made aware that it is our duty to pass on such information to a designated staff member (Head Teacher). If appropriate, the Head Teacher will then pass such information onto parents. Other agencies may be contacted for further advice. This is in line with the advice given in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

“51. If staff have a concern, they should follow their own organisation’s child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).” KCSIE 2025

Need of Professional Support

If a pupil or a parent requests information about sexual matters/family planning they should be directed to the PSHCE leader for a list of telephone numbers, or the class teacher can talk to the co-ordinator. In this situation it may be appropriate to inform the designated safeguarding lead.

Working with Parents

Before starting work in Year 5 and 6, parents will be invited into school to view resources, including videos, which will be used and will be given the opportunity to ask questions.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationship education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all parts of sex education lessons, except those deemed part of the national curriculum for science.

Applications for withdrawal should be made to the head teacher. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Inclusion

The school is committed to the provision of relationship and sex education to all of its pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal time and provision will be allocated for all groups but there may be occasions where children with Special Educational Needs & Disability are given extra support.

See SEND policy and Equality and Diversity Policy for further details.

If a parent has any concerns about the Relationships, Sex and Health Education policy, they should make the Head Teacher aware of their concern.

Review

This policy has been written according to Sex and Relationship Education Guidelines for West Sussex E4S. It is subject to a 2 yearly review and will be updated accordingly should further guidelines be received.

Related documents

Curriculum Policy, E-safety policy, Anti-bullying policy, Safeguarding policy and National Curriculum.

Useful resources and websites

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>

<https://www.e4swsccalpha.co.uk/>