

Springside School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy



May 2021
(To be reviewed May 2024)

Intent

We believe that supporting our learners to develop positive relationships and providing them with the education to be happy, healthy and safe is integral to support them to be independent, to enjoy every element of their lives, to achieve more than they can imagine and we will do this together. We believe providing our learners with the knowledge of what a positive relationship is, how to positively engage with others, to experience what this feels like and how to sustain these is vital to the development of every individual as a whole.

To achieve this, we place this as a key area of focus on every learners' personal learning plan (PLP), every outcome is truly individualised for each learner and under the 'social, emotional and mental health' section we work towards a longer-term outcome which is agreed in EHC reviews and is written into every learners' EHC plan. The PLP's are reviewed at least once a term and EHC outcomes at least once annually.

Relationships and Sex education (RSE) forms part of the PSHE curriculum and seeks to enable learners to learn and understand about how the human body functions; and long term, and as appropriate to their needs, explore feelings about love, and sexuality, and enjoy relationships based on mutual respect and responsibility free from any abuse. Learners are entitled to learn about relationships and sex.

Policy Coverage

This policy incorporates the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), it should be read in conjunction with the 'Curriculum'; 'PSHE'; 'SMSC and Learner Voice' 'Safeguarding', 'e-Safety' and 'Behaviour' policies. At Springside school we recognise the need to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding of our learners in every area to ensure they are respectful and tolerant of all. This policy has been written with the UN Convention on Rights of the Child in mind with particular reference to Article 3 (Best Interests of the Child), Article 5 (Parental guidance and children's evolving capacities) and Article 23 (Children with Disabilities) which states:

'The best interests of children must be the primary concern in making decisions that affect them. All adults should do what is best for children. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. This particularly applies to budget, policy and law makers.'

'Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of the parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their children as they grow.'

'Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support, as well as all the rights in the Convention, so that they can live full and independent lives.'

We also strive to enable children to develop into young people who will live a safe and healthy life in a way which is socially acceptable and within happy, meaningful relationships. It enables learners to develop as individuals within a wider society.

Context

Learners at Springside School have a diverse range of learning difficulties and associated special educational needs. The RSE curriculum aims to support the personal and social development of all

learners in a manner, which is appropriate to their individual needs and abilities and provide a sensitive response to pastoral issues. It seeks to emphasise the importance of developing positive self-esteem, self-confidence and to emphasise respect and responsibility for oneself and others. Also, the importance of maintaining relationships in and out of the family and taking charge of decisions about personal behaviour.

PSHE also aims to promote a positive and balanced attitude towards the importance of maintaining a safe and healthy lifestyle.

Springside School is a non-denominational school that aims to celebrate festivals and religious events from many cultures. Whole school and phase worship, beliefs and celebrations (e.g. Birthdays, Achievements, Eid, Christmas) reflect this. Learners are taught to embrace all celebrations, cultures as well as respect each other, their beliefs and differences; these are detailed on our curriculum theme mapping.

Objectives

To enable learners to be happy, healthy and safe through:

1. Understanding the value of family life, being aware of different roles within the family and representing different family models.
2. Raising awareness of the different groups that they may encounter in a diverse society
3. Understanding who they are, the differences of people and feeling comfortable to express how they feel.
4. Raising the learners' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others.
5. Developing the skills (language, decision making, choice and assertiveness) which are necessary in a range of situations.
6. Promoting acceptable and appropriate behaviour in public and private situations.
7. Giving them the skills necessary to avoid exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse
8. Giving them access to information, suitable resources and facilities appropriate to individual needs.
9. Providing learners with MLD & SLD with the correct vocabulary to know the main body parts and begin to develop an understanding about puberty by the end of year 6.
10. Learning what is socially acceptable behaviour and develop appropriate skills which will help them to lead as normal a life as possible within their own communities.
11. Developing strategies to help them keep safe, recognise risk and seek appropriate help and support in order to reduce the risk of exploitation and abuse
12. Providing learners with information how to stay safe online, including online relationships.
13. Beginning to understand the physical and emotional aspects of sexuality within the context of loving relationships. Developing the skills and understanding to be confident with their own sexuality.

Implementation:

This policy applies to **all** learners at Springside School.

For learners it may be appropriate to teach RSE within PSHE as a discrete lesson. PSHE is only included as an area of learning within the Investigative curriculum but, this is dictated by the cognitive level of the individual learner; therefore, if learners within any phase are at a cognitive level where it would be appropriate, it will be taught as a discrete lesson.

In all phases the core principles of RSE and its early objectives are taught, these are threaded through everyday activities, every area of learning and underpin every activity learners take part in.

Lessons will be taught according to the cognitive level of the learners, as decided by the class teacher in conjunction with Phase Leads. Teachers will plan for RSE as taught sessions or within EYFS principles. They will refer to the school's long-term plan and access the level of work as appropriate. Equals and the NSPCC programmes of study may be used. Contact with home must be made prior to the Sex Education lessons to inform parents and carers. Each RSE lesson must begin with ground rules allowing the learners to feel at ease for them to participate and engage within the lesson. We will assess children at where they are and what they already know. We will use this to inform planning and next steps.

Relationship and Sex Education is an integral part of the PSHE curriculum which runs through all phases. RSE enables the development of knowledge and skills and learning about feelings and behaviour. Where the class teacher feels that the topics or learning objectives may be inappropriate for a particular learner, then a suitably differentiated alternative will be offered and recorded. It may not be appropriate to teach all aspects of this RSE programme to all learners.

In liaison with the Safeguarding team, some aspects of sex education will be delivered to learners before they reach Year 6 following a discussion with the class team to ensure suitability.

Resources will be available to meet the needs of the children and they will be protected from materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and religious and cultural background of the child.

Liaison will take place with the school health team who will support delivery of the curriculum.

Should it be identified an individual required a bespoke programme of study or further support this will be provided. The school will utilise the class teams, phase leads, Therapeutic Inclusion workers, Wilderness Therapy workers and identified members of the leadership team.

Interventions are also available where it is felt a learner will benefit further from a bespoke package of support, these include Therapeutic Intervention (Th.Inc®); Wilderness Therapy, Rebound and Behaviour Support Plans (BSP).

Parents:

At Springside school we believe in working closely with parents/carers and families to ensure the best outcomes for our learners and believe that a joint approach to learning about growing up, keeping safe, relationships and other areas of RSE is highly beneficial. Should parents want to discuss the programme of study for their child individual consultations can take place with the Assistant Headteacher and PSHE lead including viewing the resources.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from sex education, relationship education is compulsory.

Parents withdrawing learners from sex education will be made aware of the implications such as:

- Increased vulnerability; vulnerable children have a higher chance of being unable to manage risk when and if they encounter situations.
- It will be the responsibility of parents to provide information on Sex education issues if they withdraw their child from school Sex education.

- A learner may struggle to manage body changes during puberty.
- The learners will lack knowledge that has been shared with peers in the school.
- A learner may have lower awareness of the diversities of relationships outside of their own family/culture.
- A learner would have less opportunity to practice assertiveness and consent skills in a safe teaching environment.

Before the implementation of this policy all stakeholders were consulted on its content, parents and carers consultation was on 17/05/2021.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The RSE Policy and Programmes will be reviewed and evaluated by the Curriculum Team for Social, Emotional and Mental Health, the Curriculum Lead for PSHE and by the governing body.