

# Sheringham Woodfields School



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## RELATIONSHIPS, SEX and HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

|                               |                                       |                                   |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Approved by SMT: <b>TBC</b>   | Approved by Staff: <b>TBC</b>         | Approved by Governors: <b>TBC</b> |
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This policy is a working document which provides guidance and information on all aspects of Relationships Education and RSE in the school for staff, parents/carers and governors. Relationships Education is compulsory for all pupils in primary education, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory for all those receiving secondary education.

### 1. Our Vision and Values

Sheringham Woodfields School is committed to supporting every pupil to become a confident, respectful, and healthy individual. We believe high-quality RSHE is a brilliant foundation on which learners with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** can build their adult lives.

Our vision is rooted in the **Preparing for Adulthood** outcomes, focusing on:

- **Independence and Autonomy:** Empowering pupils to navigate adult life with as much independence as possible, whether that means managing personal care (like menstrual health); starting reciprocal friendships; making responsible and informed decisions about their health; and well-being and keeping themselves safe.
- **Self-Advocacy:** To help young people understand their identity and SEND, building the self-esteem necessary to advocate for their own health and hobbies.

At Sheringham Woodfields School we see Relationships Education; Relationships Sex and Health Education, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Citizenship as part of our Personal Development strand of curriculum learning. We recognise the importance for our students of learning about themselves and others as they develop socially, emotionally, physically and sexually. This reflects the school ethos to ensure pupils are 'learning and growing together'. This is broken down further into 6 sub sections: Thinking of Others; Finding a Voice; Belonging; Doing Well; Having Fun; Feeling Good; and demonstrates and encourages the following values:

- Respect for self;
- Respect for others;
- Responsibility for their own actions;
- Responsibility for their family, friends, schools and wider community.

### 2. How This Policy Was Created (currently in process)

This policy was co-produced through meaningful engagement with our whole school community:

- **Pupil Engagement:** We involve all learners, including those with complex needs, by recording engagement through physical reactions and facial expressions, as well as surveys for those who can access them.
- **Parental Engagement:** We work with parents and carers from the earliest stage to ensure consistency in language—such as using scientific terms for genitals—which is crucial for safeguarding.
- **Data-Driven:** Our curriculum is designed to reflect the specific priorities of our pupils depending on their pathway (informal and formal) and phase (primary and secondary). Where necessary we will also deliver pupil-specific interventions and access external agencies for additional support where vulnerabilities or safeguarding concerns are present.

### 3. Teaching and Learning

RSHE is taught as a core subject through planned, weekly lessons led by the class teacher or HLTA. Aspects of the personal development curriculum, including emotional literacy, are covered at various times throughout the school day - at regular intervals as well as ad hoc opportunities. This is also in line with our behaviour policy and pupil-specific Support and Intervention Plans.

- **Skilled Delivery:** Staff receive regular training to ensure they are comfortable and confident in leading sensitive discussions and breaking down barriers to engagement, particularly for **students** who may require safer, more tailored environments with resources carefully selected including visuals.
- **Whole School Approach:** All staff model healthy, respectful relationships, consent to touch, and privacy in their daily interactions with pupils.
- **Expert Visitors:** We may use supervised visitors to enrich the curriculum, ensuring all materials are age-appropriate and unbiased.

RSHE planning, resources and Continued Professional Development for teaching staff is monitored by the Assistant Head Teacher with responsibility for Curriculum, Teaching and Achievement. The wider school community plays a vital role in supporting the RSHE curriculum, through our pastoral Family Support Team.

#### How Relationships Education and RSE is delivered at Sheringham Woodfields.

Relationships Education and RSE are included in our Personal Development long term plans for all key stages and pathways. Pupils learn about families and people who care for us, caring and respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe. In addition, we include work on physical health and mental wellbeing such as emotions, changes to the adolescent body and healthy eating. The DfE guidance states that:

*Relationships education should equip pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to act with kindness and respect in all their relationships as they grow into adulthood, to enjoy their relationships, and to keep themselves and others safe. (p6)*

and

*The characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. (p15)*

Topics and lessons will be adapted according to the cognitive ability of the pupils. Where appropriate, some pupils will access appropriate elements of the RSE curriculum through their Personal Development sessions. If this only suitable for an individual pupil or a small group then this will be provided in a bespoke manner.

As students move through the upper school we continue to address key aspects of RSE and for pupils for whom it is appropriate will cover self-awareness, their bodies, understanding of public and private, family and friends and understanding change.

As a school we recognise the diversity of need within our school population. This is reflected in the content, grouping and resources we use in our Relationships Education and RSE lessons.

Relationships Education and RSE should not be delivered in isolation but firmly embedded in all curriculum areas, including Personal, Social Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship. At Sheringham Woodfields the main content is delivered in Personal Development lessons modules throughout the year but some areas have clear links to the science, computing and physical education curriculums as well.

Relationships Education and RSE is normally delivered by class teachers in mixed sex groups other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups. Active learning methods which involve children's full participation are used. Relationships Education and RSE can also be delivered in smaller tutorials to address specific learning needs.

It may occasionally be the case that, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of Relationships Education and RSE in school. Sheringham Woodfields has a code of practice for using visitors to support the delivery of Personal Development:

- Visitors are invited in to school because of the particular expertise or contribution they are able to make;
- All visitors are familiar with and understand the school's Relationships Education and RSE policy and work within it;
- All input to Personal Development lessons are part of a planned programme and negotiated and agreed with staff in advance;
- All visitors are supervised/supported by a member of staff at all times;
- The input of visitors is monitored and evaluated by staff and pupils. This evaluation informs future planning.

Evaluation/assessment of the Relationships Education and RSE programme is conducted using a variety of informal activities which have been built into the programme and through our Personal Development assessment.

In addition to the elements of Relationships Education and RSE covered in the Personal Development and science curriculums it is important that all staff feel confident and competent to deal with questions or issues which may arise with individuals within the school. Learning opportunities may be identified for individuals outside timetabled sessions.

#### **4. Our RSHE Curriculum**

We use a 'spiral curriculum' approach, revisiting core themes as pupils mature, dependent on pupil's pathway (informal and formal) and phase (lower and upper school). It is at the discretion of the Assistant Head Teacher for Curriculum, Teaching and Achievement to make informed decisions on what is expected to be taught, and the use of appropriate schemes (e.g. the PSHE Association or Pol-Ed).

- **Accessibility:** Nuanced or adult-themed secondary topics are simplified to be accessible to learners with complex needs, starting with fundamental underlying concepts. Topics are not taught where it is not appropriate for the cognitive developmental stage of the pupil, nor where it would cause alarm or distress.
- **Relevance:** The curriculum is responsive to the needs of our students, focusing on skills for navigating a digitally orientated world and preventing sexual violence.
- **Long Term Plans:** Curriculum maps, medium term lesson plans and resources are available on request.

## 5. Defining Relationships, Health, and Sex Education

The following are outlined by Norfolk County Council for guidance and definition, but discretion between the Assistant Head Teacher for Curriculum, Teaching and Achievement and class teachers is used in regards to deciding on expectations of topics taught and where it is appropriate or not appropriate to do so.

- **Relationships Education (Primary/Secondary):** Focuses on the building blocks of positive, safe, and healthy relationships.
- **Health Education (Compulsory):** Addresses the link between physical and mental health.
- **Sex Education (Primary):** This is non-compulsory and includes e.g., how a baby is conceived and born.
- **Relationships and Sex Education (Secondary):** Compulsory from Key Stage 3 onwards.

## 6. Assessment and Questions

Assessment is about growth, not "passing or failing".

- **Starting Points:** We determine starting points for each topic to ensure learning is developmentally appropriate.
- **Recording Progress:** We use Evidence for Learning (EFL) and our Woodfields Steps framework for Personal Development to capture the student progression journey.
- **Safe Space:** We may use an 'ask-it-basket' for anonymous questions and distancing techniques (like stories) to make learning comfortable.

## 7. Working with Parents

We believe RSHE is most effective when school and home work together to reinforce concepts.

- **Transparency:** Parents can view curriculum materials via our website, provided by the class teacher as well as requesting them via the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for Curriculum, Teaching and Achievement.

### Right to Withdraw:

Parents/Carers **do not** have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or the Relationships aspect of RSE, or the science curriculum. Parents **do**, however, have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex education aspect of RSE or from any sex education being taught in the primary phase other than what is covered in the statutory science curriculum. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the Head Teacher, who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in any sex education programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed, or if the child requests to receive sex education three terms before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday regardless of parental request (the "16+ rule").

Materials can be made available to parents/carers who wish to supplement the school sex education programme or who wish to deliver sex education to their children at home instead of having it delivered in school.

As parents of children with additional needs you may worry that RSE will encourage sexualised behaviour. However, evidence shows that effective RSE delays first sexual experiences and does not induce sexualised behaviour where they would not occur anyway. It is invaluable that we provide RSE delivered at the appropriate level in order to keep pupils safe

## 8. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Keeping pupils safe is our top priority.

- **Limits to Confidentiality:** Teachers cannot promise complete confidentiality if a safety concern is raised; disclosures follow the school's safeguarding policy.

- **Empowerment:** Teaching pupils about privacy, boundaries, and consent is a key preventative safeguarding measure that supports their independence.

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the named DSL who may confer with the Head Teacher before any decision is made.

The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

### **Child Protection**

The school has a separate Safeguarding Policy. Effective Relationships Education and RSE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns.

### **Controversial and Sensitive Issues**

Staff are aware that views around Relationships Education and RSE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all Relationships Education and RSE 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 that may have different opinions.

### **Dealing with Questions**

Both formal and informal Relationships Education and RSE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age, comprehension and maturity of the pupil concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. The school believes all staff must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned.

We want to support students with their emerging sexuality by helping them to understand that experiencing sexual awakening and sexual desire is a normal part of the human experience and not something that should be denied to them because of their cognitive or physical ability.

There are points in time when Relationships Education and RSE related topics are delivered to support a child with emerging behaviours. If this is the case, the school will discuss the relevant topic areas with parents/carers (and other relevant agencies) and ensure this is agreed before the pupil is supported.