



FOREST SCHOOL

Relationships and Sex Education Policy Prep School including EYFS

v1.1

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Rationale

At Forest Prep School we value the importance of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to help and support pupils through their physical, moral, spiritual, cultural and emotional development. RSE is perceived as entering the curriculum at several points throughout school at KS1 and KS2, but also as part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) elements of pupils' learning experience. Relationship and sex education is a lifelong process of acquiring information and skills, forming attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual relationships, identity, intimacy and consent.

This process begins informally, with information presentations to parents and carers before any formal sex education takes place at School. We are committed to an RSE curriculum that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBTQ+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject.

Sex and relationships education underpins lifelong learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, morality, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE).

From 2020, the Department for Education has made relationships education compulsory in all primary schools in England and sex education compulsory in all secondary schools.

We want every pupil to grow up healthy, happy and safe and able to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain.

We try to ensure that the programme is relevant to all our pupils, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. For all year groups, we aim to provide a safe environment in which misconceptions and concerns can be raised and discussed without judgement.

Forest Prep School believes that RSE should:

- Form an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.
- Encourage every pupil to contribute positively to our community, and support others within the community.
- Be set within a wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g., nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches.
- Encourage the respecting of different views. We as a community are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any one type of family structure. The important foundations are healthy relationships, respect and support for each other.
- Generate an honest and open atmosphere where questions and discussions on relationship matters can take place without any stigma, judgment or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, healthy relationships and guiding the journey into adulthood. We aim to work in partnership with parents and pupils, to ensure we are constantly reviewing what we do, how we do it and most importantly why we do it.

- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer, and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, external organisations, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

In the Prep School RSE seeks:

- To establish pupils' sound foundation for personal and social development
- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled
- To clarify and/or reinforce existing knowledge
- To help pupils understand their sexual feelings and behaviour
- To prepare pupils for puberty
- To develop skills to help pupils prepare for adolescence
- To develop pupils' skills for a healthier and safer lifestyle
- To develop and use pupils' communication and assertiveness skills to cope with the influence of their peers and the media
- To nurture pupils' respect and care for their bodies
- To develop skills to help pupils avoid and resist premature sexual experience
- To provide opportunities for pupils to raise concerns and ask questions, and to correct any misunderstanding that children may have gained as a result of receiving inaccurate information
- This may include questions about marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and sexual orientation
- To encourage pupils to establish a personal moral code and promote self-confidence and self-esteem
- To support and assist pupils in understanding themselves, their development as responsible adults and their moral responses to their environment

Legal requirements for RSE

All schools must teach RSE, and parents cannot withdraw their child from relationships education because it is important that all pupils receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe. However, if parents do not want their child to take part in some or all the lessons on sex education, they can ask that their child is withdrawn. At primary level, the Head must grant this request.

Aims and Objectives of RSE

- To give our pupils essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful, and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline
- To develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want
- To understand how humans change through adolescence
- To understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships
- To understand about mental wellbeing and identify how people can help
- To communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues
- To develop an understanding of what a healthy lifestyle looks like
- To understand the changes associated with drugs, alcohol, and tobacco

RSE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHEE curriculum and address the emotional aspects of development and relationships and the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction and health. The science curriculum is delivered in KS1 by class teachers and mostly in KS2 by the science teacher. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of health, development and reproduction although the importance of relationships is not forgotten.

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some children will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons, ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When pupils ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would provide information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

There is no expectation that any teacher delivering RSE will automatically answer pupil questions, as this may infringe on personal boundaries, however, in this instance, pupils will be advised to talk to their parents or to another member of staff. Teachers ensure that RSE lessons are taught in an environment where questions and discussions on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.

We recognise that parents are key people in teaching their children about issues regarding sex, health, relationships and growing up and as such, we aim to work in partnership with pupils and parents. Prior to any lessons on puberty or reproduction taking place, parents are invited to attend a meeting where the content of lessons and resources used are shared.

Links with other policies

The RSE Policy forms part of the Forest Prep School's PSHEE policy and references the following:

- PSHEE Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Main Elements of RSE

RSE has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values

- Learning about the values of family life and stable relationships
- Learning the value of respect, love and care
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making
- Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices
- Learning about the nurture of children
- Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour

Personal and Social Skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others
- Learning to make choices based on understanding of differences and with the absence of prejudice
- Providing opportunities for young people to develop the ability to understand the consequences of their decisions and actions, and to manage conflict
- Empowering pupils with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

Knowledge and Understanding

- Information about healthier, safer lifestyles
- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, emotions and relationships

RSE Curriculum Content

EYFS and Key Stage 1

- Self-esteem
- The concept of growth and change
- Showing respect
- Relationships – family, friends; understanding others and respecting difference
- Feelings
- Knowing the correct names for the external parts of the body, including sexual parts where appropriate
- Personal hygiene
- Knowing places that are safe and where to go for help
- Making safe choices – saying ‘no’, when to keep a secret, when to tell
- Knowing that we have rights over our own bodies

Key Stage 2

- Life changes
- Self esteem
- Respect for their own and others’ bodies
- Recognising risk/making safe choices – who has access to their bodies?
- Resisting unwanted peer pressure
- The influence of the media
- How to access help
- Feelings and emotional change (linked to puberty)
- Bullying
- Relationships (family, friends, love, marriage)
- Understanding differences
- Preparation for sexual maturity and the process of conception and birth
- How changes at puberty affect bodily hygiene

Puberty

In this age group, sensitive provision of education regarding puberty is particularly important. The emotional aspect of puberty will be covered in PSHEE lessons, which will allow pupils to discuss more freely any aspect of the topic from the scientific aspect covered in science lessons. Lessons will cover emotional changes and relationships appropriate to age and stage and themes as detailed below:

- understanding that periods are a part of puberty for girls (menstruation) and that boys go through physical changes during puberty (wet dreams)
- understanding how daily life might be affected by having a period and what to do when it happens (personal hygiene)
- identifying sanitary products that help manage a period
- knowing where to find information and advice on puberty and periods
- understanding why puberty can change the way they feel and act in everyday life
- recognising how emotions change during puberty (crushes, friendships)
- developing strategies for dealing with these feelings in a positive way
- understanding the idea of consent; starting with relationships within the family unit and, at later developmental stages, how consent might be associated with physical contact and subsequent sexual relationships

The organisation of Relationship and Sex Education

- The PSHEE subject lead is the designated teacher with responsibility for coordinating relationship and sex education
- RSE is delivered through a combination of science, PSHEE and dedicated RSE sessions
- Members of PSLT, subject teachers and form tutors teach relationship and sex education in a wider context
- At KS2, as part of the National Curriculum for science, pupils are taught the main stages of the human life cycle
- In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils are taught about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence

RSE lessons in mixed gender groups

- The teaching of RSE is a balance of information: gathering and active learning, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6, when discussion and question sessions, in a range of situations, will form a large part of the topic
- Resources to teach relationship and sex education include bespoke teaching PowerPoints, reference books, leaflets, extracts from videos as well as related practical items (e.g., sanitary towels, tampons etc.)
- Sex education is usually delivered in single-gender groups but mixed gender groups are being used for discussion about aspects of relationships education

Training staff to deliver RSE

It is important that RSE is taught by teachers that are knowledgeable, skilled and confident and we acknowledge that the effective teaching of RSE, within the PSHEE framework, requires particular skills and expertise. All staff will have the opportunity to attend awareness-raising sessions and to discuss whole-school issues. Those staff with specific responsibility for delivering the programme will be consulted as to their particular training requirements, and access to these will be through CPD. It is essential that those teachers delivering the programme are confident in their abilities, and in the support offered by this policy.

Child Protection/Confidentiality

The School is aware that effective relationship and sex education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. All staff are aware of the School's Safeguarding Policy and their statutory training is kept up to date. Pupils are encouraged to de-personalise and generalise observations and comments in RSE lessons and, as part of the preparation for this session, pupils are asked not to share personal information.

Dealing with difficult questions

The School will endeavour to answer questions as honestly as possible but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom, provision would be made to meet the individual pupil's needs.

Sometimes a pupil will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom, normally with total innocence. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and if a teacher is uncomfortable with the nature of a question, they should decline to answer it at the time or even at all, although a pupil should never be made to feel uncomfortable for having asked a question.

Teachers may choose to answer a question in a subsequent lesson to give them time to address it appropriately. The anonymous writing of questions to be answered at random by the teacher is widely used as it can overcome some of these issues. An anonymised question box is a feature of the RSE sessions.

Methodology and Resources

A wide range of teaching methods are used so that pupils can participate actively in their own learning. Quizzes, case studies, scenarios, role plays, guest speakers, group discussion are all utilised throughout the RSE Programme. Teaching resources are kept up to date and are selected carefully for their appropriateness to the pupils and topic content.

If a teacher is uncomfortable with delivering part of the curriculum, support is offered by the Head of PSHEE or by more experienced teachers.

PSHEE specific teacher training is also offered throughout the academic year, with the aim of role-playing scenarios such as how to manage difficult questions, to more specific training relating to content, to ensure all teachers of PSHEE are comfortable with the curriculum they are delivering.

Informal assessment is carried out during PSHEE lessons and comprises of questionnaire feedback and summary sheets.

We do not formally assess in PSHEE lessons; however, this is something that we are looking to change and include. Similarly, we plan to report on progress within PSHEE lessons annually.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The programme is regularly evaluated by the Head of PSHEE, and the views of pupils and teachers are used to make changes to the programme on a regular basis. Current issues/news items are also incorporated into the curriculum to make it relevant to pupils.

Learning walks occur where the Head of PSHEE can monitor the delivery of lessons, as well as opportunities for PSHEE teachers to observe experienced PSHEE teachers in the classroom.

The Head of PSHEE sits on the Prep School's Extended Leadership Team in order to oversee how PSHEE can best be interwoven throughout all aspects of school.

Parental consultation

The role of parents/carers in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

Forest Prep School will:

- Consult with parents/carers when planning the RSE policy.
- Ensure parents have access to the policy (online or hard copy at request).
- Encourage parents/carers to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through RSE.

The School informs parents when aspects of the relationship and sex programme are taught and provides opportunities for parents to view the resources being used and to discuss the terminology used throughout. If parents wish to seek clarification about any aspect of our RSE curriculum, they are invited to speak to the PSHEE subject lead, the Head of Pre-Prep or the Prep School Deputy Head Pastoral.

EDI: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different religious backgrounds including complying with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The topics that are included in the core guidance will be appropriately handled to ensure sensitivity for all. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups and if this is the case, we will try our best to ensure we adapt our teaching provision where and when possible.

Under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief (collectively known as protected characteristics).

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive relationships and sex education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary. Sex and relationship education should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively, respectfully and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them. Our pastoral support will also consider the needs of gay, lesbian, transgender or bi-sexual pupils. We actively tackle any homophobic bullying.

Gender

Both boys, girls and non-binary pupils have the right to equal RSE at Forest Prep School and we consider topics and approaches that actively engage both. We are proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

The question of gender stereotypes and associated issues will be discussed as part of RSE so that pupils are aware of potential problems with inclusion. Pupils will learn to develop empathy, self-awareness and respect for themselves and others by:

- exploring the sense of identity and defining the term diversity
- discussing stereotypes and gender stereotyping
- exploring family diversity and sexual orientation in general
- defining bullying and homophobia and associated language
- discussing body image issues

Conclusion

Areas of the relationship and sex education programme will be assessed and monitored on an ongoing basis. Parental involvement will take place in the form of a letter home, and invitation to a session explaining the content for pupils by the PSHEE subject lead, which will provide an opportunity answer any questions and to discuss any concerns.

Policy reference

DfE Guidance for Schools found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907638/RSE_primary_schools_guide_for_parents.pdf