

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL



SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

UPDATED: SEPTEMBER 2024

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Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) Policy

The government is in the process of setting out changes to the SRE guidance for schools, soon to be identified as RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education).

Introduction

Relationships education has been compulsory for pupils in primary education since September 2020. In primary schools, the subject should put in place the key building blocks for healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy.

What is new in the updated curriculum?

An age limit has been introduced, to ensure that children are not being taught about sensitive and complex subjects before they are ready to fully understand them.

The concept of gender identity – the sense a person may have of their own gender, whether male, female or a number of other categories is highly contested, and should not be taught. Teaching this theory in the classroom could prompt some children to start to question their gender when they may not have done so otherwise, and is a complex theory for children to understand.

What are the age limits?

In primary school, subjects such as the risks about online gaming, social media and scams should not be taught before year 3. Puberty shouldn't be taught before year 4, whilst sex education shouldn't be taught before year 5, in line with what pupils learn about conception and birth as part of the national curriculum for science.

Do schools have to follow the guidance?

Following the consultation, the guidance, when published, will become statutory, which means Woodlands Primary school will follow it unless there are exceptional circumstances. There will be some flexibility within the age range, as we will sometimes need to respond to questions from pupils about age-restricted content.

When will schools start teaching this?

Schools will be able to use the guidance as soon as the final version is published later this year (2024).

However, schools will need time to make changes to their curriculum, allowing an implementation period before the guidance comes into force.

Our current Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) policy is based on the current DfE guidance document 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (ref DfE 0116/2000), with a view to make amendments when the final guidance is published after the consultation period. In this document, sex education is defined as *'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.'*

What is Sex and Relationships Education?

Effective sex and relationships education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. The objective of sex and relationship education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. It will help them to learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Why is SRE in schools important?

High quality SRE helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons:

- Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships.
- Older pupils frequently say that sex and relationships education was 'too little, too late and too biological'. OFSTED reinforced this in their 2013 'Not Yet Good Enough report'.
- SRE plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding requirements. OFSTED is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables pupils to learn about safety and risks in relationships.

Aims

At Woodlands, we teach SRE in the context of our aims and values which is part of our wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education and within our character development education programme. The aim of SRE is to provide children with age-appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health-related behaviour.

SRE at Woodlands:

- Is a partnership between home and school.
- Is age appropriate and relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity.
- Is inclusive of difference and challenges stereotypes and prejudice.
- Respects the views of other people.

- Develops an awareness in children of their own personal safety including what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.
- Ensures that all children are assertive and have the confidence to say and do what is right.
- Ensures that all children understand the dangers associated with online technologies and will help children to develop strategies to keep safe;
- Contributes to a child's better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships.

Promotes positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect.

- Recognises the importance of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship and the importance of family life.
- Supports the children to learn the importance of self-control and cope with the influences of their peers and the media.
- Challenges body image and stereotypes, particularly in the media.
- Develops a child's respect and care for their bodies.
- Supports the children in the acquisition of medically and factually correct knowledge.
- Prepare children for puberty and adulthood.
- Helps pupils gain access to information and support.
- Aims to reduce early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying.
- Uses active learning methods, and is rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated.
- Ensures children's views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching.

Curriculum

We teach SRE through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main SRE education teaching in our PSHE curriculum, using Christopher Winter resources, we also teach some SRE through other subject areas (for example Science and PE) where we feel it contributes to a child's knowledge and understanding of their body, and how it is changing and developing. All schools must teach the following as part of the National Curriculum for Science. [Non-statutory guidance shown in brackets.]

Key Stage1 National Curriculum Science:

- Identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense.
- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults.
- Describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene.
- [They should also be introduced to the process of reproduction and growth in animals.]

- [The focus at this stage should be on questions that help pupils to recognise growth; they should not be expected to understand how reproduction occurs.]

Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Science:

- Describe the difference in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird.
- Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals.
- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age.
- [Pupils should find out about the different types of reproduction including sexual and asexual reproduction in plants, and sexual reproduction in animals.]
- [Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.]
- [Pupils should continue to learn about the importance of nutrition and should be introduced to the main body parts associated with the skeleton and muscles, finding out how different parts of the body have special functions.]
- [Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans; by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.]

Our SRE curriculum is clearly mapped out for each year group to ensure that sensitive topics are taught in an age-appropriate way with clear progression. This content has been agreed in consultation with governors, parents, children and staff. The table below outlines the topics taught by the end of each phase.

EYFS and KS1	Lower KS2	Upper KS2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring friendships (2a,2c,2d, 2e) • Families and people who care for me (1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1f) • Respectful relationships (3a, 3e, 3g) • Being safe (5d, 5e) • Mental wellbeing (6b,6c,6g) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful relationships (3a,3b,3d,3e,3f,3h) • Caring friendships (2b,2c,2d,2e) • Being safe (5a,5b,5c,5d,5f,5g,5h) • Families and people who care for me (1a,1b,1c,1d,1f) • Changing adolescent body (8a,8b) • Mental wellbeing (6a,6b,6c,6d,6e,6f) • Menstruation (9a) • Online relationships (4b,4d) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental wellbeing (6a,6b,6c,6d,6e,6f) • Changing adolescent body (8a,8b) • Menstruation (9a) • Families and people who care for us (1a,1b,1d,1f) • Caring friendships (2a,2b,2c) • Respectful relationships (3b,3d,3h) • Being safe (5a,5b,5c,5d,5e) • Online relationships (ra,4b,4c,4d,4e)

We have a planned programme which we will follow as long as it is appropriate for the needs of our children. However, due to the nature of the subject, we are aware that there may be times when children ask questions out of the context of a planned session. If children do ask about issues linked to SRE, they will be dealt with appropriately and sensitively. There may be times when a member of staff does not immediately answer a child's question. But the teacher will speak to them at a later, convenient and appropriate time and may also encourage or advise them to speak to their parent or carer.

Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of SEND children in order for them to have full access to the content of SRE.

The role of parents and other professionals

Woodlands Primary School understands that the primary role in children's sex and relationship education lies initially with a child's parents and carers. However, we do not underestimate the role of school and staff that play a pivotal part in teaching our children about SRE. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. We believe that through a mutual exchange of knowledge and information, all of our children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities.

To promote this, at Woodlands Primary School we ensure that:

- Pupils' religion and beliefs are taken into account when planning and teaching topics and are appropriately handled.
- Parents are informed about the SRE policy and practice.
- Any questions that parents may have about SRE are answered.
- We seriously take any issues that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for SRE in the school.
- We seek the views of parents and encourage them to be involved in reviewing the SRE policy.
- Parents are informed about the best practice known about SRE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.

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 therefore, at Woodlands Primary School we recognise that parents have the right to withdraw their child from those aspects of SRE not included in the Science National Curriculum. However, parents should discuss this with the Headteacher and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in and why. By working in

partnership with parents we will work to ensure that parents recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education.

At Woodlands Primary School, we encourage and welcome external agencies and other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals. This will give us valuable support with our sex and relation education programme. We believe that visitors should complement and never substitute or replace planned provision and it is the RSE/PSHE subject leaders and class teachers' responsibility to plan the SRE curriculum and lessons.

Preventative curriculum

In line with our safeguarding policy, we recognise that our school has an important role in the delivery of the 'preventative curriculum'; teaching children the knowledge and skills they need to protect themselves from all forms of abuse and to develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

At Woodlands Primary School, we recognise that abuse is one of the very worst things that can ever happen to a child, but it's not always easy to pick up the signs, and often a child might not even know that what's happening is wrong. Our curriculum aims to help teachers, parents and children to address some of these issues. This supports the preventative curriculum and our moral and legal obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils.

At Woodlands Primary School, through our ambitious and progressive curriculum, we aim to provide our children with the skills to recognise abusive behaviour and understand that abusive relationships are never acceptable or right. We support our children by:

- Responding to disclosures and child protection concerns quickly and efficiently.
- Promoting a 'listening' school ethos.
- Offering appropriate support for children and staff dealing with abuse.
- Offering children opportunities to build self-esteem and confidence and to develop respectful relationships.
- Working with outside providers to develop a broad range of curriculum enhancement activities.
- Covering how children can keep safe within the PSHE curriculum.
- Participating in high quality child protection training for all staff.
- Highlighting children's rights.

Responding to disclosures

As a result of any RSE lesson, or indeed any lesson in our curriculum, a child might disclose that they are suffering from a form of abuse or are aware of it happening to others. Any disclosure of abuse will be treated as a potential child

protection concern, and reported to the designated safeguarding lead in line with the school's procedures.

In line with our school safeguarding policy, when listening to and dealing with disclosures, staff will:

- Actively listen to the child.
- Stay calm.
- Take what the child is saying seriously.
- Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing.
- Tell the child that they will have to share this information.
- Explain what will happen next.
- Record the information as quickly as possible – facts not opinion.
- Sign and date everything that has been recorded.

By the end of Primary School, children will understand their:

- Mental Well-being
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

Equal Opportunities

At Woodlands Primary School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, and all those receiving services from the school regardless of gender, race, and disability.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed as part of our regular policy review schedule