

# **WEST PARK ACADEMY**

## **Relationships and Sex Education Policy**



**Approved by Board of Trustees:** **January 2024**

**To be reviewed:** **January 2025**

### **Rationale and Ethos**

This policy covers our approach to the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

It was produced through consultation with the Trustees, staff and parents.

**West Park Academy, part of Shared Vision Learning Trust** an exempt charity limited by guarantee in England and Wales (Registered no: 7659444) whose registered office is at Alderman Leach Drive, Darlington, Co Durham DL2 2GF

This policy is available to view on the school website and on request will be printed.

## Curriculum Intent

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is about developing the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It is a key part of our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Social, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) provision, and is an important aspect of preparing our children for life in Modern Britain. RSE at primary school is about ensuring that children are adequately prepared for learning at secondary school – and for the information which they are receiving through the media, online and ‘everyday life’ – delivered in an age appropriate manner. Children will develop an understanding of what their rights are and know how to access resources and support in order to stay safe.

At West Park Academy we believe RSE is important to all of our pupils because it

- Is an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life
- Is an entitlement for all pupils in our care.
- Is important that we encourage every pupil to contribute to the school community that aims to support each individual as they grow and learn.
- Is set within the wider school context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. children living with step families; those living with same sex parents, children looked after by extended family. It includes a variety of types of family structure and acceptance of diversity.
- Encourages pupils and staff to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different values and opinions to sexual orientation, relationships and diversity. The important values are love, respect and care for each other.
- Generates an atmosphere where questions and discussion on personal matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment. It creates a safe learning environment for children to be open about their families, their questions and attitudes can be discussed safely, without fear of judgement.
- Recognises that parents and carers are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We continually engage parents and carers on the curriculum being delivered and provide support to talk about the same topics at home.
- Recognises that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with other health and education professionals.

## **Safe and supportive learning environment**

Lessons take place within a safe learning environment and within a 'spiralling curriculum' – so children can revisit concepts, themes and topics several times, going deeper each time, across their time at primary school. Each one builds on the one before. The curriculum is fluid in order to meet the needs of the children in our school and takes account of the Healthy Lifestyle surveys carried out with Year 5 and 6 pupils annually.

## **Inclusion**

RSE is inclusive of all children within our care. We have a variety of resources to support children's learning, we use our professional judgement as to what topics should be delivered and how. Teachers are non-judgemental and we know our audience well before delivering sensitive areas of this subject.

## **SEND**

All children, including those with additional needs and recognised SEND, have the right to access appropriate RSE which meets their needs. We will use a range of resources and support mechanisms in order to fulfil this such as a tailored curriculum, extra support from an adult, pre-teaching aspects and selecting appropriate resources. We will not exclude access to RSE for any pupil. If a child is functioning at a significantly lower level to their peers, their work is planned and delivered using the SEND framework and delivered by experienced SEND practitioner.

## **Sexual Identity, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation**

We aim to deal sensitively with issues of sexual orientation and gender identity and answer appropriate questions and offer support. We aim to deliver a fully inclusive curriculum which acknowledges that the wider world has many kinds of people and relationships in it. We embrace individuality and follow the new statutory guidance for September 2020 which is underpinned with the positive qualities and attributes of a healthy relationship, no matter who that is with. We support children both within this curriculum and within the wider curriculum to help them understand this. Teachers are aware that 'incidental' teaching is key in all aspects of RSE and they will support children as and when this occurs.

## **Intended outcomes**

As a result of our RSE programme of learning, pupils will be able to make informed choices, look after their bodies, including their mental wellbeing, be able to cope with the pressures that society puts on them and be able to speak confidently.

The learning outcomes of our programme follow the statutory guidance from September 2020. The relationship part is highlighted below:

<b>Families and people who care for me</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.</li> <li>• the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.</li> <li>• that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.</li> <li>• that marriage<sup>13</sup> represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.</li> <li>• how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.</li> </ul>

<b>Online relationships</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.</li> <li>• that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.</li> <li>• the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.</li> <li>• how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.</li> <li>• how information and data is shared and used online.</li> </ul>
<b>Being safe</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).</li> <li>• about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.</li> <li>• that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.</li> <li>• how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.</li> <li>• how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.</li> <li>• how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard,</li> <li>• how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.</li> <li>• where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.</li> </ul>

<b>Caring friendships</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.</li> <li>• the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.</li> <li>• that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.</li> <li>• that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.</li> <li>• how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Respectful relationships</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.</li> <li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li> <li>• the conventions of courtesy and manners.</li> <li>• the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.</li> <li>• that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.</li> <li>• what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.</li> <li>• the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.</li> </ul>

Appendix 1 shows the Long Term Planning for PSHE Education at West Park Academy of which Relationship and Sex Education is part of.

## Role and Responsibilities

The RSE programme will be led by Gemma Chambers (PSHE & RSE Lead).

- It will be taught by class teachers.
- It will be supported by teaching assistants, the school nurse and other professionals when it will enhance the delivery.
- Teaching staff will receive RSE training on the curriculum and any areas they feel they are unfamiliar with to support pupils with their learning.
- External visitors will be used to supplement the curriculum.

Teachers are responsible for carrying out baseline activities, planning appropriate lessons with support of the programme lead if requested and carrying out an assessment at the end. Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will oversee this, looking at monitoring and evaluating the programme with the programme lead. This will be fed to the Trustees annually.

## Legislation

Revised Department for Education statutory guidance states that from September 2020, all schools must deliver Relationships Education in primary schools. There is no right to withdraw from this subject as the contents – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to understand. There is no right for a parent to withdraw their child from any aspect of teaching that this policy covers except the explicit sex education part that sits outside of the science curriculum but forms part of this policy. At West Park Academy *we teach the following through our science curriculum*

- ***describe the differences 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.*** (We chose to include the reproduction of humans as part of this objective)
- ***describe the changes as humans develop to old age.*** (This includes puberty)

*At West Park Academy we have the following objective as part of our Relationship and Sex Education Curriculum.*

- ***How babies are conceived and born (and there are ways to prevent a baby being made).***

*This involves exploring basic contraception e.g condoms and the pill. We would cover this in response to children's questions around this and/or depending on the specific cohort. Some year groups are more mature than others and would benefit where as it may be inappropriate for some.*

The RSE policy supports/complements the following legislation:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Relationships Education: Relationships and Sex Education (RSE and Health Education)
- Equalities Act 2010
- Children and Social Work Act, 2017

## Curriculum Design

We use the results from the Healthy Lifestyle Survey to help shape our curriculum which means although we have a programme that we follow we adapt as necessary in response to need. We determine pupils' prior knowledge/starting points by carrying out baseline assessments with the class at the beginning of each topic because pupils will bring differing levels of knowledge and understanding. The programme will be taught through a range of teaching methods, including P4C, circle time, questions and answers, role-play, visits and visitors. We will ensure that sessions, including those on risky behaviours remain positive in tone by using scenarios and group agreements to support. We feel it is important that pupils are helped to make connections between the learning they receive in PSHE education and

their current and future 'real life' experiences which is why we help pupils make connections between their learning and 'real life' behaviours. Our priority is to ensure that our children understand how to stay safe and where to access help if needed. Selected resources, such as books and film clips, will be used to support and promote understanding within a moral/values context. These resources are reviewed by the team prior to being used to ensure they are age and stage appropriate.

Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHE education provision and will cover:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

These are revisited and built on each year to ensure depth is met for each year group.

### **Assessment**

We will assess pupils' learning and progression identifying whether children have achieved the objectives or whether they are working above or below expectations. This judgement will be made by looking at what children have said and knowledge they have gained. We will make sure that we are assessing learning which is specific to RSE education and not other areas of the curriculum such as writing. We will evidence pupils' learning and progression by looking at and comparing baseline assessments with end of unit assessments. This will show how a child's thoughts, knowledge and understanding has progressed. Within this, pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress. RSE is a skills based programme so we also ensure that we provide the opportunity to observe if children have the skills to put the knowledge into place.

### **Safe and effective practice**

We will ensure a safe learning environment by agreeing ground rules through consultation with the class on how they would like to be treated. Distancing techniques, such as creating characters with unknown names or making scenarios, are used so that children don't become upset that it is linked to them. Pupils' questions will be answered carefully and issues handled sensitively by all teaching staff. If they feel uncomfortable at responding within a group they will explain that they will think about it and discuss it at a later date either with the class or the individual child. Pupils will be able to raise questions anonymously by putting their questions in the question box that each class has. All staff teaching RSE will be supported by the PSHE & RSE lead (Gemma Chambers) and SLT in planning and delivering lessons.

## Confidentiality

Each class has a set of ground rules that they will recap at the beginning of the lesson and refer to throughout if and when needed. Where possible confidentiality is maintained and staff do not discuss children with whom do not need to know. We never promise complete confidentiality to children. If a pupil makes a disclosure then staff know this needs recording on CPOMS. If it needs following up immediately then they will approach the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Jenna Ford) or deputies (Sam Hirst, Hayley Woodcock).

## Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Where this happens teachers will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Jenna Ford) and in her absence a deputy (Sam Hirst/Hayley Woodcock). Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be required to share lesson plans with staff prior to delivery and discuss the need for confidentiality. This is in accordance with the external visitor policy pro forma.

The policy will be available to parents through the website. As part of our whole school approach to RSE, Parent Information sessions and opportunities for parents to view the materials and resources used will be made available on a yearly basis. We will notify parents when Relationships and Sex education will be taught through the half termly enquiry grids which are published on the website.

The Trustees will be informed of the RSE policy and curriculum through regular meetings that take place with the SLT and the Trustees. Pupil voice will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of pupils through questionnaires sent out yearly and through the school council.