



Relationships Education Subject Policy

This policy was drafted by Ashleigh Chamberlain. It was presented in draft version to the full staff compliment for discussion and revision. The final version was presented to Governors for consideration, approval and adoption.

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1. The importance of Relationships Education

Relationships Education plays a fundamental part within our whole school ethos at Birchwood Primary School. The purpose of Relationships Education is to ensure that our children are safe, whilst equipping them with the skills, knowledge and values to create healthy and respectful relationships. Through providing high quality Relationships Education, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to the consideration and respect of equality and celebration of difference.

Children at Birchwood will learn about the characteristics of positive and respectful relationships (with the main focus being placed upon friendships, family relationships and relationships with other children and adults); this will also teach children the importance of relationships for mental health and wellbeing. As children at Birchwood get older, they will learn about online friendships and the necessary precautions to take when communicating with others online. At Birchwood, we believe that all children and young people have a right to an inclusive and age-appropriate Relationships Education.

The information below complies with our statutory obligations to deliver Relationships Education under sections 34 & 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It also has due regard for the statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance and other relevant guidance.

Aims and Objectives

Through the teaching of Relationships Education at Birchwood, our main aim is to ensure that all of our children are equipped with the knowledge, skills and values to enable them to form safe and respectful relationships. Through this, our children will:

- realise the importance of their health, wellbeing and dignity
- build a sense of self-esteem and self-worth
- explore and value their personal identity and the identities of others
- explore a range of family structures, including LGBT+ families, single parent families and the many other family structures
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

2. Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

The Governing Body has;

- a duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils
- a responsibility to ensure that education prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Head teacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;

- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility of ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- nominated a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Head teacher and PSHE co-ordinator and report back to the Governing Body;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

3. Responsibility of the Head teacher and the Senior Leadership Team

The Head teacher and the Senior Leadership Team will

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the link governor and co-ordinator;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy if required

Role of the Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator will

- lead the development of this policy throughout the school;
- work closely with the Head teacher and the Nominated Governor;
- provide guidance and support to all staff;
- provide training for all staff when the need arises;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- review and monitor;
- if required, report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Role of the Nominated Governor

The Nominated Governor will

- work closely with the Head teacher and co-ordinator;
- ensure this policy and other linked policy is up to date;
- ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
- report to the Governing Body;
- report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Role of the School Council

The School Council may be involved in

- discussing next steps;
- gauging the thoughts of all pupils

4. Teaching and Learning

Relationships Education will be delivered in Birchwood as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all key stages, using a spiral curriculum approach. It will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate (for example, when teaching about the external body parts). It is also taught as part of our 'hidden curriculum', whereby children will learn through the modelling of respectful relationships between adults and adults/adults and children and other, unplanned opportunities for discussion.

EYFS and Key Stage One

Throughout their first few years at Birchwood, children will be taught the importance of creating relationships by learning to play cooperatively and take turns with others. They will be taught to take account of one another's ideas and to show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings; this will form the basis of nurturing positive relationships with adults and other children.

Children will go on to learn about different types of relationships and the importance of these on our lives; this will include how to identify and maintain positive relationships. Children will also learn about how to recognise and manage hurtful behavior and bullying, including an introduction to cyberbullying. Through the teaching of Protective Behaviours, children will recognize the difference between safe and unsafe feelings and how to respond to these feelings. They will also learn about the private parts of the body and how to respond when something/someone makes them feel uncomfortable

Key Stage Two

Throughout Key Stage Two, this knowledge will be reinforced and applied to many different situations. The children will learn about more complex and mature issues as they move through the school.

Children will begin to learn about the importance of different types of relationships and to respect the similarities and differences between different people's relationships (including different types of families). They will delve deeper into the different types of bullying, including peer pressure and other hurtful behaviours such as stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. They will look more deeply into recognizing and responding to unsafe relationships, both online and offline, and begin understanding the basic principles of boundaries and consent in an age-appropriate way. Teaching of Protective Behaviours will be continued throughout the school to ensure that children are aware of their rights and responsibilities and are able to recognize safe and unsafe behaviours.

5. Sex Education

Many aspects of sex education are complimented by our science curriculum where children learn about the main external body parts and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty).

In the statutory Health Education curriculum, children learn about puberty and menstruation. We deliver content on menstruation from Year 5 so that girls can learn about menstruation in advance of them starting their first period.

In Year 6, our sex education programme builds upon the content already delivered through the Science and Health Education curriculum and is the foundation for helping children to stay safe. We recognise that some parents may be uncomfortable with their children receiving sex education in primary school; however, in our experience, children will naturally ask questions about sex and their bodies, and be curious about where they come from. We believe that it is safer and better for

children to receive age appropriate and medically accurate information from trained teachers and from external visitors rather than learn inaccurate information through peers/online. We believe that sex education should allow children a safe space to ask the questions that they may have without shame or judgement.

Relationships Education is taught in line with government guidelines; therefore, parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons as all areas taught are relevant to the children and the changes that are happening to them as they grow up (taught in line with the science curriculum). We will take care to highlight lessons that we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other.

Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of RSE, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of sex education and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing. Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the headteacher to discuss their concerns. The headteacher will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum. If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the headteacher in writing and the school will keep a record of this. We will automatically grant a parental request to withdraw their child from any sex education, other than as part of the Science or Health Education curriculum.

We will remind parents annually that the request to withdraw is still in place and invite them to confirm whether they want to continue this arrangement.

6. Curriculum planning

Relationships Education is delivered at Birchwood through formal and discrete methods of teaching. Children will make links to Relationships Education through their themes and key driving texts. This will be planned for but will also be made up of regular, unplanned discussions to embed learning. Our Relationships Education programme will be rooted in our school's ethos and will therefore also be delivered and assessed through assemblies, student voice (such as the school council) and the school environment. There will also be dedicated curriculum time to ensure a planned, balanced and progressive delivery of Relationships Education is taught. Relationships Education will be delivered by a class teacher or teaching assistant.

Pupils will be given opportunities to ask questions during each Relationships Education lesson. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to explore natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships. All teaching at Birchwood takes place in a safe learning environment and is underpinned by our one school rule, 'Consideration and Respect'. All of the themes that are covered in Relationships Education are age-appropriate and are delivered by teaching staff in a child-friendly way. As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. If questions arise that teachers are unsure will be covered within the statutory guidelines, then they should seek support from SLT or the PSHE coordinator. We believe that an open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma and shame that can surround some of the issues explored in our Relationships Education curriculum. Importantly, we believe that children are better protected from harm and abuse when they are able to discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment.

From time-to-time, we may invite external experts and visitors to deliver some Relationships Education lessons. External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our Relationships Education by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school. External visitors may include school nurses, Loudmouth and the NSPCC. A teacher will always be present throughout these lessons so as to build on the pupil's learning after the session(s) as well as answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have. Any external visitors will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy. We will also ensure that:

- There is appropriate planning, preparatory and follow up work for the session
- The visitor understands the cohort of children involved

7. Relationships Education and Inclusion

We believe that Relationships Education is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our Relationships Education is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum. We are also committed to a Relationships Education that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBT+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching Relationships Education. An inclusive Relationships Education at Birchwood will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

In line with the other school policies, Relationships Education aims to accommodate all children through planned differentiation and resources. This will take into account the need to adapt lessons to account for children's different learning styles, especially those to whom English is an Additional Language (EAL), children with Specific Special Educational Needs and the Gifted and Talented pupils. We are aware that some of our children may need additional Relationships Education teaching to support them with their development and to prepare them for later life; this should be planned and co-ordinated by the class teacher along with the SENDCO.

At Birchwood, we acknowledge that Relationships Education is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education. Relationships Education helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships. We recognise that when discussing these issues, some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures.

While at Birchwood we aim to create a learning space that feels safe for children and young people to disclose, we also want to protect children's privacy. We do this by using a number of teaching techniques including the use of a working agreement, where ground rules are created with pupils on what makes a safe and welcoming environment for all children.

8. Cross Curricular Links

Relationships Education forms part of our thematic learning approach and often links to other areas of the curriculum in order to provide purposeful learning opportunities for pupils. Children will use their key driving texts to identify themes linked to their Relationships Education learning. Other key cross curricular links include a close link with computing (in providing children with the skills and knowledge to maintain safe and respectful relationships online) and science (in teaching children about the growing and changing that human bodies undertake).

9. Assessment for Learning

Children will demonstrate their knowledge and ability in Relationships Education throughout verbal discussions, written work and their levels of questioning. Therefore, teachers will use a variety of assessment, including informal observational assessment alongside assessing written work in PSHE books. The teacher actively assesses work and discussions and uses this information to plan for future learning.

Teachers should use baseline assessments to ensure they understand the children's starting point and to use this to monitor progress throughout lessons. This could be done through a variety of techniques, such as pupil self-assessment at the beginning and end of a module of learning, a quiz or a mindmap of what the children know. This is key in Relationships Education to ensure that lessons are pitched in an age-appropriate way.

Written and/or verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his or her progress. At the end of each year, teachers assess pupil's progress in PSHE, which will include Relationships Education, and this is reported to parents through the end of year report.

The PSHE subject leader will also conduct pupil interviews to ensure that the PSHE curriculum that is being taught is meeting the needs of all pupils (including SEND and pupil premium children).

10. Resources

Teachers should make use of the Protective Behaviours resources to support their teaching of the Relationships Education curriculum. There are also several resources and websites which will supplement teaching, such as the NSPCC, SEAL and PSHE Association resources, which staff will be regularly updated on. These will be clearly identified on the PSHE curriculum overview.

11. Equality Impact

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity/reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

