



THORNGUMBALD
PRIMARY

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Issue Date: Spring 2026
Review Date: Spring 2027

Introduction

Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) is an integral part of our curriculum that helps the children develop, mature that gives them skills, they can take into their future. At Thorngumbald Primary school, we aim to create an environment in which children are able to learn and understand the values and responsibilities of individuals within society and develop an appreciation of the relationships which underpin daily life. RSHE forms part of the overall policy on Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship and draws on elements of science taught through the National Curriculum. In order to deliver the RSHE curriculum we use the Jigsaw programme which offers us a comprehensive, carefully thought-through Scheme of work which brings consistency and progression to our children's learning in this vital curriculum area. (The overview of the programme can be seen on the school website).

The Curriculum

Relationship Education:

The focus for relationships education at our school is teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

Relationships Education is learning about how to:

- Be appreciative of existing relationships.
- To form new healthy relationships.
- To enjoy strong positive, non-exploitative, caring relationships online and in person. (This will particularly reference family relationships including marriage, friendships and relationships with peers and adults).

By the end of primary school, our children should know:

Families and people who care for me:

That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability:

- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring Friendships:

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- 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.
- 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.

Respectful Relationships:

- 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.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- The conventions of courtesy and manners. the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- 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. 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.
- What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online Relationships:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- 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.
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- How information and data is shared and used online.

Being Safe:

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- 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.
- That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
- How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Sex Education:

The DfE Guidance 2019 (p.23) recommends that all primary schools 'have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. However, 'Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools'. (p. 23) Schools are to determine the content of sex education at primary school. Sex education 'should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born'.

Puberty is taught as a statutory requirement of Health Education and covered by our Jigsaw PSHE Programme in the 'Changing Me' Puzzle (unit) and it is also taught by our school nurse. In order to teach this in a scientific context, and knowing that National Curriculum Science requires children to know how mammals reproduce, we have opted to teach this within our Science curriculum, not within PSHE or Relationships and Sex Education as we believe this is most appropriate for our children.

Therefore, the parent right to withdraw their child is not applicable. We are of course happy to discuss the content of the curriculum and invite you to contact the head teacher Miss Norton.

The Science Curriculum (statutory):

The National Curriculum for Science includes content on human development, including reproduction. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw from this aspect of the curriculum.

Animals, including humans:

Pupils should be taught to:

- Year 1: identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense.
- Year 2: notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults.
- Year 5: describe the changes as humans develop to old age.

Living things and their habitats:

Pupils should be taught to:

- Year 5: describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird.
- Year 5: describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals.

Health Education:

Health Education is learning about physical health and mental wellbeing, so pupils can make wise choices to ensure their own flourishing and the flourishing of others. (See “Mental Health and Wellbeing: Towards a Whole School Approach” 2018).

It is about learning to be in a healthy relationship with themselves and how to look after themselves and keep themselves safe.

By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

Mental Wellbeing:

- That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- That there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.

- How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

Internet Safety and Harms:

- That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- About the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.
- Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted. that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

Physical Health and Fitness:

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.

- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).
- How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

Healthy Eating:

- What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco:

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.

Health and Prevention:

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
- The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.

Basic First Aid:

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

Changing Adolescent Body:

- Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

Equalities/Inclusion:

“Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Schools should also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.”
(Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education DFE 2020).

Thorngumbald Primary School is an inclusive school. All learners will be included in RSHE with teaching tailored to meet their individual needs. Advice from the SENCO will be sought if required and further support may be provided from outside agencies. The school recognizes that some parents and carers of children with special educational needs may find it difficult to accept their children’s developing sexuality and that some pupils will be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than their peers, and others may be confused about what is acceptable public behaviour. The school will provide support for these children so that they are able to develop skills to reduce the risks of being abused and exploited, and to learn what sorts of behaviour are, and are not, acceptable.

Who is responsible for teaching RSHE?

At Thorngumbald Primary School all staff have a shared responsibility for teaching RSHE since, by definition, teaching opportunities could arise at any time. However, focused RSHE sessions are led by class teachers as part of the PSHE and science curriculum. To ensure progression and a spiral curriculum, we use Jigsaw, the mindful approach to PSHE, as our chosen teaching and learning programme and tailor it to children’s needs.

In Year 5, the school nurse also works with the girls to support in the aspects outlined in the ‘Changing Adolescent Body’ section of the DfE guidance.

In Year 6, the school nurse helps the children to develop their understanding of how to manage changes which happen during puberty and how babies are made and are given the opportunity to ask questions about this. Parents are informed of this prior to it taking place and given the option to view resources, to ask any further questions and to withdraw their child from the aspect which relates to how babies are made.

Other outside agencies may also be involved when additional professional or specialist support is considered to be of benefit to the children’s understanding of particular topics.

Involving Parents/Carers:

At Thorngumbald Primary School we believe that parents are the primary educators of their children in PHSE and that it is most effective when it is collaboration between school and home. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children and young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

The school will provide support to parents and carers providing parents with an overview of the Jigsaw puzzles (units). Parents will be provided with specific information with reference to RSHE content and teaching. As mentioned earlier Parents and carers can request that their child is excused from RSHE, taught outside of the national curriculum for science. It is our aim to ensure that Parents/ Carers are fully informed, consulted and provided with the support needed to ensure all children receive the knowledge, understanding, support and care to grow and develop positively as learners throughout their time at Thorngumbald Primary school and well into the future.

Monitoring and Review:

The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors this policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the PSHE (RSHE) programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Governors scrutinise and ratify teaching materials to check they are in accordance with the school's ethos.