Shepherds Down School

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Definition:

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Relationship Education

Aims at Shepherds Down:

At Shepherds Down School, Relationships Education helps children learn the foundations of positive, healthy relationships. This includes understanding friendships, family relationships, and how to interact appropriately with other children and adults.

Children are taught what a relationship is, what friendship means, what family looks like, and who the trusted people are they can turn to for help and support. They learn how to take turns, share, and treat others with kindness, respect, and consideration. Lessons also cover the importance of honesty, personal boundaries, and understanding when and how to ask for or give permission. Children are supported to understand personal privacy in a way that is appropriate to their age and development.

As children grow, they are taught about personal space and boundaries, and how to show respect for themselves and others. They learn how to recognise the difference between safe and unsafe behaviour, and between appropriate and inappropriate contact or interactions. This helps prepare them for later learning about consent, in an age-appropriate and sensitive way.

Positive relationships are a key message throughout the curriculum, including relationships that may take place online. Children are taught how to stay safe online, what information should not be shared, and what to do if something online makes them feel worried or uncomfortable, where appropriate we also cover awareness of AI and fake news. We also support parents and carers to manage their children's online safety.

Throughout Relationships Education, children are encouraged to understand and value differences between themselves and others. The curriculum also supports children's emotional and mental well-being by helping them recognise their own feelings, understand the emotions of others, and learn ways to manage and regulate their emotions.

How we teach Relationships Education at Shepherds Down School

Relationships Education is taught by all teachers, both directly and indirectly in a way that is differentiated, personalised and accessible, to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental ages. We ensure that the teaching is sensitive, both age and developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

Relationships Education is delivered in the following ways:

Indirect Teaching:

- Developing play skills
- Developing tolerance
- Developing appropriate communication skills
- Developing interaction skills
- Developing turn-takings skills
- Building trusting relationships and ensuring children feel safe and nurtured
- Supporting appropriate behaviour, particularly during play times and play situations
- Labelling of emotions in the moment
- Helping children to link how they feel with how they behave
- Supervised internet use
- Use of debrief opportunities

Most of this learning will be identified, monitored and evaluated through the Communication, PSD, Bridging and Informal schemes of work and associated 'I Can' statements. All children have individual targets in relation to one or more of the above, depending on their identified learning priorities.

Direct Teaching:

- Children following the subject specific phase of our school curriculum are taught Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) which covers Relationships; Feelings and Emotions; Keeping Safe in the Home, which includes online safety; Keeping Safe Out and About; Keeping Healthy; and Self Awareness and Confidence.
- In addition, for year 5 and 6 we deliver a 6 week block of work written by the NSPCC on Keeping Safe, which covers key learning such as; public and private parts of the body; different forms of abuse; and who can help if they don't feel safe.
- Subjects such as Science and PE will also cover some of this learning

Key learning contained in PSHE is also included in the PSD 'I Can' statements and will be monitored and evaluated in this way.

Parents/Carers Right to Withdraw

As this is part of the statutory day to day curriculum of the school, parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education. Parents can request to see the curriculum materials by contacting the school office.

Sex Education

Definition:

The Sex Education teaching at Shepherds Down School is tailored to the age and physical and emotional maturity of each child. It is aimed to ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and know the names of the main external body parts. For a small number of children, in consultation with parents, this may also include how a baby is conceived and born.

How we teach Sex Education at Shepherds Down School

There are two strands of our Sex Education curriculum.

The first strand covers naming of the main external body parts and the physical changes that occur during puberty, including the need for good personal hygiene. This occurs during year 5 onwards or earlier, on an individual basis if needed. It can be taught by relevant class teachers, both directly through Science and also a stand-alone Sex Education curriculum; and/or indirectly on a more individual basis through social stories (eg in relation to menstruation), labelling of body parts and prompting/supporting good personal hygiene.
The second strand covers basic human reproduction, including how a baby is conceived and born. This will be taught directly only through our stand-alone Sex Education curriculum and only for year 6 children.

Parents/Carers Right to Withdraw

As the content of the first strand sits within the statutory school curriculum, parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from this strand of Sex Education at Shepherds Down School.

Parents/carers DO have the right to withdraw their child from the second strand of Sex Education. At the start of year 6, parents/carers will receive a consent form and be invited to a talk with our RSE lead, who can answer questions and share how we will cover these topics. Children will only receive these sessions with permission. Parents can request to see the curriculum materials by contacting the school office.

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