



Sex, Relationships and Health Education Policy

Governors' committee normally reviewing:	Curriculum
Date approved by Governors:	20.06.2024
Review Cycle:	2 years
Next Review Due:	June 2026
Author(s):	Stephanie Luck and Lesley Flower-Harris

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

Introduction

Following the 2020 revised National Curriculum, there is the need for Relationship and Health (RHE) guidance to be delivered as part of the Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) framework at Cherry Garden School. PSED education is an integral part of each child's development. Through our PSED programme, we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. Sex education is taught to children as and when necessary, and is tailored to each child's individual needs.

Aims

Sex education will aim to:

- Develop an awareness of identity and different body parts.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Develop an awareness of body changes during puberty, and learn how to be independent in their self-care routines.
- Promote an awareness of appropriate touch, and behaviours appropriate for public and private spaces.

Relationship education will aim to:

- Teach 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.
- Support pupils to develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Teach pupils the importance of respecting other's boundaries, including how to consent or communicate refusal.
- Encourage learners to find appropriate ways of expressing their feelings, needs and wants through a range of communication strategies.
- Develop ways of staying safe in the community and when interacting with unfamiliar people ("stranger danger", how to say hello).
- Learn who and how to ask for help, and to communicate if something is wrong.
- Develop an awareness of online relationships, and staying safe online (when appropriate)

Health education will aim to:

- Develop an awareness of different emotions, and strategies for promoting mental well-being.
- Promote a healthy lifestyle through physical exercise and healthy diet.
- Develop self-care skills relating to a healthy lifestyle, including handwashing, teeth-brushing and personal hygiene.
- Develop an awareness of people who can help us (doctors, firefighters, nurses) and how to make a call to emergency services (if appropriate for individual children).
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene

Strategies for Delivery

For the majority of the pupils at Cherry, SRHE will be delivered through daily, and naturally-occurring interactions between children, adults and peers, as part of our play-based curriculum. It is important that all staff understand they have a responsibility to implement this policy and promote the aims of the school at any time they are dealing with the children, regardless of their own personal views and beliefs. In addition, some aspects of the RHE programme will be covered through:

- Understanding of the World curriculum (body parts, healthy eating)
- Small nurture groups
- Social stories
- Assemblies and special events
- Sensory stories
- PE, in the context of health and hygiene or body awareness

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Sex, relationship and health education should be planned for as part of personal and social development, on a half termly, weekly and daily basis, when a specific session is required. However, Sex, Relationship & Health Education should be promoted across the day and in relevant contexts (toileting, swimming, in the community).

Where appropriate some children will have behaviour management plans that will be monitored on a regular basis

Progress within personal and social development will be recorded and reported as part of the Annual Review and Annual Reports.

As learners mature, certain issues may arise which will be addressed through on-going discussion between classroom staff, parents and other outside agencies. This will then encourage appropriate learning strategies to be delivered to individuals.

Health and Safety Issues.

There is a Health and Safety Policy to cover areas in more detail.

Also refer to:

Intimate care policy

PSED policy

Behaviour policy

Learners are encouraged to be independent; therefore the whole school environment must be kept safe, with appropriate levels of supervision.

Equal Opportunities.

“Special schools have a particularly sensitive role to play. Children with learning difficulties are entitled to the same opportunity as other children to benefit from sex education. They may need more help than others in coping with physical and emotional aspects of growing up, they may also need more help in learning about what sorts of behaviour are and are not

acceptable, and in being warned and prepared against unacceptable behaviour in adults. Schools should bear in mind that some parents of children with special educational needs may find it difficult to come to terms with the idea that their child will some day become sexually active”.

Taken from 1993 Education Act.

It is important to remember that “family” may look very different from child to child, and that teaching about relationships requires us to be sensitive of our children and their circumstances. For example, families may include grandparents, LGBT parents, single parent families, foster parents or adoptive parents. Care must be taken to ensure that we explore and discuss families of all structures, to reduce stigmatisation and discrimination. As a school, we will ensure that our library contains books portraying different family structures and dynamics, and discuss this with the children when relevant.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are involved in discussions around sex, relationship and health education and personal and social development on an individual basis.

Parents/carers will be consulted prior to their children attending focused Sex Education sessions in KS1 and KS2, and will have the opportunity to discuss their concerns with the PSED coordinator or Headteacher.

Parent support advisors have access to information and resources that will be used for learning (social stories, chat boards etc) and can provide 1:1 support and guidance for parents. They can also obtain support from class teacher and school nurse.

If a child requires a particular focus session, around topics such as masturbation, public/private areas, the class teacher will tailor their teaching to the child’s individual needs, and work closely with parents to ensure a consistent approach between home and school. Cherry Garden School recognises that parents may feel uncomfortable with the teaching of Sex Education, and will act sensitively when managing questions and concerns, offering an open-door policy for parents/carers to join in sessions. Religious and cultural beliefs are respected within the school.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from focused Sex Education sessions.

Teaching progression across the curriculum

Explore

'In the early years children should be given clear guidance about dignity and modesty and they need to have a suitable vocabulary to help them understand their bodies.' - David S Stewart

- Use body awareness and massage activities to concentrate on the body parts of the face, arms, legs hands and feet, neck and tummy.
- Children are encouraged to share and to get to know who else is in class and to make choices.
- Adults working in the classroom will promote positive, nurturing relationships with the children, whilst encouraging them to be autonomous in their play, and as independent as possible in their self-care.
- Use role play opportunities to promote the consolidation of self-care skills, such as doll role play or washing up.
- Promote emotional wellbeing through massage, relaxation, meditation and use of behaviour plans or sensory circuits.

Discover

- Have the opportunity to work and play with a variety of people
- Develop safe work and play practices and take responsibility for themselves and their belongings
- Begin to discuss feelings concentrating on feelings that the child might know already like being tired, sad, happy, hungry etc. and then add feelings like angry and need a break.
- Develop an understanding of significant relationships, and familiar and unfamiliar people in school, at home and in the community.
- Develop an awareness of gender through play and focused groups
- Discuss unsafe situations, and learn how to ask for help
- Become confident in maintaining good personal hygiene in familiar contexts (after swimming, before cooking, after toilet)
- Participate in preparing a range of healthy recipes
- Be more active in using strategies that promote emotional wellbeing (sensory relaxation, sensory circuits, fidget toys, breaks)
- Role play on unsafe situations, and how to request help

Investigate

Continue with activities discussed in Explore and Discover, and when the child is ready, move on to more focused activities:

- Their awareness of changes to the main parts of their bodies
- establish and develop independent personal care routines with an understanding of the need for privacy
- have an introductory awareness of changing emotions during puberty

In agreement with the parent, children will be prepared for the physical and emotional changes of puberty and learn about sexual behaviour. This will be differentiated depending on the children's needs, and may be explored through daily self-care routines, social stories or personalised sensory stories. Some children may benefit from focused SRE groups; small groups led by a familiar teacher or Learning Support Assistant. Parents will be invited to attend a parent workshop if their child may benefit from one of these groups.

These groups take place weekly, and will follow a Nurture-Group approach, allowing the children to explore topics in a relaxed environment. The content of the sessions will follow a scheme of work, but can be tailored to allow extra time to work on specific skills, if needed. For example, a group for pupils who may be near to starting menstruation may explore this through social stories, small group discussion and role play.

Growing up groups will be looking at sexual feelings and masturbation. For example; What public and private means in school and home? Where on my body is private? Where can I go to be private?

This will be taught through role play, social stories and other appropriate learning resources. Children will be given the opportunity to develop and rehearse their skills at their own level.