

	Gislingham CE Primary School <i>‘Belong, Believe, Together Achieve’</i>	Policy Document Agreed: October 2024 Review: Every two years Date: July 2026
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At the heart of our vision is the belief that the spiritual, social, mental and physical development of every child is as important as academic achievement. We strive to nurture children to believe in themselves and honour our Christian values, ensuring they have the capacity to thrive and flourish throughout their lives.

Relationships and Health Education Policy (RHE)

Introduction

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationships Education at Gislingham CE Primary school. We believe that relationships education is important because it teaches the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other peers and adults. Pupils also learn about the physical aspects of growing up, therefore we often refer to it as RHE; Relationships and Health Education.

The overarching aim of RHE is to give young people the knowledge that they need in every context to lead safe, happy and healthy lives.

This policy was produced in consultation with staff, governors and parents and is available to parents via the school's website. It will be reviewed every two years to ensure that it reflects the attitudes and beliefs of the school population and remains up-to-date with both current guidelines from Government and the DfE but also remains relevant to the experiences of our pupils.

We acknowledge that in order for children to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. We understand that high quality, evidence based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils to develop resilience, and to know how and when to ask for help.

We ensure that RHE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities by teaching RHE in a variety of ways and by being sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils. Not only does the teaching need to be sensitive of these needs, but it also needs to help pupils realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours or prejudice-based language. We acknowledge that all young people deserve the right to honest, open and factual information to help better form their own beliefs and values, free from bias, judgement or subjective personal beliefs of those who teach them.

Legislation

We recognise that as a school we have a legal responsibility under The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 & 35 of the Children & Social Work Act 2017, to provide comprehensive Relationship Education and Health Education for all pupils receiving primary education.

We are required to teach relationships education as part of our curriculum offer and this informs not only our relationships education but links with Science, Computing, PE and RE.

This policy is informed by and to be read in conjunction with:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education (current version)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy
- Framework for Independence

Definitions

Relationships education helps children to develop the skills to recognise and manage healthy relationships both online and in the real world. It is designed to build self-esteem and to explore personal identity. It is about helping children understand and make sense of the world they are growing up in; to recognise the differences and similarities between their peers and their families; to understand the fact that every human being is unique and has the right to be respected. There are many different family structures and all children have the right to feel safe.

Comprehensive relationships education helps keep children safe by allowing them to understand appropriate and inappropriate touching, to realise that their body is amazing and belongs to them. It is about building the foundations of an understanding of consent and personal boundaries, in that no one has the right to touch you in a way you don't like but also the difference between public and private behaviours. It is important for children to know the names and functions of their body and to be reassured it is natural to be curious about them.

Furthermore, relationships education helps children to develop their vocabulary and emotional literacy to enable them to talk about and manage their feelings. It helps children build their own support networks and the confidence to ask for help when they feel unsafe. This is a required element of the Health Education Guidance.

Health Education teaches pupils about physical health and fitness, healthy eating, drugs, alcohol and tobacco, mental wellbeing and puberty, including menstruation. They will understand how the bodies of both girls and boys function and change as they grow into adults and how a baby is conceived and formed as set out in the human life cycle. These topics are covered as part of our Science and PE curriculum.

We recognise it is completely natural for children to have questions about their bodies and to be curious about where they came from. An open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older students. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps reduce the stigma that can surround some of the issues explored in our Relationships Education curriculum. Importantly, we believe children are better protected from harm and abuse when they are able to discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment. Teachers will answer questions as fully as they feel age and stage appropriate, based on the level of knowledge demonstrated by pupils during the lesson. Questions which teachers feel uncertain about answering should be discussed with a senior member of staff and answered at a later date. Consideration should be given to religious or cultural factors, and to parents' wishes before questions are answered.

Roles and responsibilities

The relationship education programme will be led and monitored by the PSHE lead who will report to the headteacher and governors.

We feel strongly that this subject should be taught by the class teachers who know the children the best and will have the whole picture of each individual being able to tailor the offer appropriately. It will be supported by the class teaching assistant/HLTA when appropriate.

In order to implement the policy effectively all staff will receive training which is needs driven and timely. The training will focus on subject knowledge and ensuring all children can access the core offer.

Pupils with SEND

As far as is appropriate, pupils with special educational needs should follow the same Relationships Education programme as all other pupils. Careful consideration is given concerning the level of differentiation needed, and in some cases the content or delivery may have to be adapted. Teachers and/or teaching assistants/learning support assistants work with individual pupils where required, and if appropriate.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective relationships education, 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. Teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead and the school's child protection procedures will be followed.

Curriculum Design

Relationships and Health Education covers the following themes:

- Families - how they are all different and all are to be valued
- Relationships - positive relationships and friendships; respecting ourselves and others - exploring how our behaviour can impact on others
- Online relationships
- Keeping safe
- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harm
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy Eating
- Facts and risks associated with drugs, alcohol and tobacco

- Basic first aid
- The changing adolescent body

In our school, we meet the learning objectives as set out in the Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 for primary schools with a whole curriculum approach where possible as we feel this contributes significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding. For example, computing lessons include online relationships and internet safety and harms; science lessons include healthy eating, physical health and fitness, health and prevention and the changing adolescent body; and, linked with RE, children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved.

Since RHE incorporates the development of mental wellbeing and relationships, pupils' learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum but through all aspects of school life including the playground.

Aspects of RHE that cannot be taught effectively through other subjects, is covered through our PSHE curriculum.

The scheme of work for RHE at Gislingham maps out a grid of lessons/units for each year group which progresses and returns to themes as children move through the school.

An overview of the learning in each year group can be found [here](#). In the Early Years, Relationship Education is covered implicitly in pupil led, play led and teacher led exploratory activities in line with the Personal, Social and Education Development, Communication and Language and Understanding of the World areas of learning from the Early Years' Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils are taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy.

Respect for others is taught in an age-appropriate way where children learn about negotiations in play, resources and personal space. These link with our Christian Values which are woven throughout our curriculum.

Teachers talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter so that pupils are able to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that lead to happiness and security. By doing so, this helps them to recognise any less positive relationships. The principles of positive relationships also apply online and children are taught how to keep themselves safe online as well as appropriate online behaviour, in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives.

Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care is taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.

Relationships Education also enables pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing. Pupils are provided with the knowledge they need to

recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This is delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This also includes understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils are taught how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it is important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and, as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

RHE will always be taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law. Through consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum, we ensure that we continually recognise and respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances including gender identity, faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole school community.

Harassment and bullying

Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds and all are entitled to learn in a supportive environment, free from fear. Some pupils may use terms such as 'poof', 'gay' and 'lesbian' as a way to harass other pupils. This is unacceptable and will be dealt with as any other form of harassment, through the school behaviour and discipline procedures. An understanding of human difference, including sexuality, is an important aspect of education and will be addressed as appropriate through the curriculum.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

Relationships Education will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent, that the curriculum is meeting the new national requirements under the Relationships, RSE and Health Education guidance, and that learning outcomes are reflective of pupil need. This will include:

- Teachers evaluation of lessons
- Lesson observations
- Pupil voice
- Samples of work