

## Introduction

RSE becomes statutory in all schools from September 2020. The law requires that Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is to be taught in all secondary schools in England, and that **Relationships Education** is to be taught in all primary schools in England. Primary schools are also required to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum, and Health Education will also be mandatory in all Government-funded schools, which includes content on puberty.

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.

As part of the Education Act 2002, all schools must provide a balanced and broad based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, whilst also preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We acknowledge that in order for children to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need the 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 recognise that we have a responsibility under the **Equality Act 2010** to ensure the best for all pupils irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion, sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children. As a result RSE needs to be sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils (including SEND ) and may need to adapt and change as the pupils of the school change. Not only does the teaching need to be sensitive of these needs, but also to help the pupils realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours or prejudice-based language.

We will make every attempt to be respectful of the cultures and beliefs of our families and appropriately sensitive. Equally it is essential that young people still have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. This must include clear, impartial scientific and factual information. 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.

This policy covers our school's approach to RSE, not only in planned lessons but also through our ethos of 'We all matter', the attitudes of our staff and pupils alike, and the approach and commitment to equality both within and outside of the classroom.

## **Defining Relationship Education at Wrenbury:**

The Department for Education defines relationships education as, teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other peers and adults.

We believe relationship education is designed to help 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 every human being is unique and has the right to be respected because 'we all matter'. There are many different family structures and all children have the right to feel safe. Relationship education has been shown to help keep children safe by allowing them to understand appropriate and inappropriate touching, to realise that their body is fantastic 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. Indeed, by teaching children the correct terms for their private parts, children are proven to be safer from abuse. In addition, we believe relationship 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.

## **Defining Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing at Wrenbury**

The DfE states the importance of 'a positive two-way relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing, and the benefits to mental wellbeing of physical exercise and time spent outdoors.'

Physical health is linked to physical activity, which is defined as any body movement that works your muscles and requires more energy than resting. Some physical activity is planned for as in a PE lesson, whilst others can be spontaneous such as children taking part in a game of tag or climbing on the climbing logs or across the traversing wall at playtime.

Mental wellbeing can be defined as 'feeling good and functioning well' and includes having a positive self-image, good self-esteem, self-confidence as well as resilience.

At Wrenbury, we ask 'what is the behaviour saying?' acknowledging that a wide range of behaviours can tell us whether or not a child or adult is experiencing good mental wellbeing. We also know that being outdoors and active can lift the mood and the experience of wellbeing.

## **Defining Sex Education at Wrenbury:**

Although The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made Relationship Education compulsory in all primary schools, Sex education is currently not compulsory. However, the Department for Education continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils.

We, like many other schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so.

It is important that the transition phase (years 5 and 6) before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively to 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. In our school, sex education is an opportunity to answer children's questions about where they came from, an opportunity to explore their own stories and to be clear about how a baby is conceived and formed as set out in the national curriculum for science. Furthermore, it ensures that all children are prepared for both the physical and emotional changes of puberty, including menstruation. Children need to understand how both girls' and boys' bodies function and change as they grow into adults.

We recognise that some parents may be uncomfortable with the thought of their children receiving sex education in primary school. Equally, we recognise it is completely natural for children to have questions about sex, their bodies and to be curious about where they came from. In an age where children in primary school have access to information through mobile technology and the internet, we believe it is better that children receive age appropriate answers from us than it being left to their peers or the internet.

We believe that sex education should allow children a safe space to ask the questions they may have without shame or judgement. Evidence states that a graduated age-appropriate spiral curriculum is the best way of preventing the topic of sex, reproduction and private body parts of becoming taboo and children from becoming embarrassed by the topic.

We believe it is the duty of our school to give our young people the learning that will enable them to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. This includes ensuring that they have the skills to keep themselves safe from harm and develop positive and healthy relationships, free from exploitation pressure or abuse.

## **How RSE is taught at Wrenbury Primary School**

In 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 school holistic approach. Underpinning all our teaching and the children's learning is our ethos 'we all matter'.

## **Relationships Education**

We use the Christopher Winter Project for YR-6 to teach the following aspects of RSE at Wrenbury through a progressive series of lessons: *Families who care for me; Caring friendships; Respectful relationships; Online Relationships; Being safe.*

- **Wellbeing Lunch Clubs**

We provide further focus and discussion on these areas in our Wellbeing Lunch Clubs. Our weekly Wellbeing Lunch Clubs for YR-6 follow three termly themes and are led through a story approach. Two of these themes support our Relationships education: The Equality Act – There are no outsiders in our school; Friendship building – Friendship Terrace; Self-esteem and understanding our feelings and emotions – Action for Happiness (see Wellbeing Lunch Club Statement-website)

- **NSPCC**

The NSPCC is invited into school to give Speak Out, Stay Safe and Pants are Private assemblies and workshops.

## **Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing**

We use the Christopher Winter Project YR-6 scheme to teach the following aspects of the Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing Education: Mental Wellbeing; Internet safety and harm; Changing adolescent body. The Science Curriculum is planned to meet the following aspects of RSE: Health and Prevention; Physical Health and Fitness and Healthy Eating.

### **KS1 Y2 Animals, including humans**

- describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene

### **Lower KS2 Y3/4 Animals, including humans**

- identify that animals, including humans, need the right types and amount of nutrition, and that they cannot make their own food; they get nutrition from what they eat
- identify that humans and some other animals have skeletons and muscles for support, protection and movement

### **Upper KS2 Y5/6 Animals including humans**

- recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function

In addition to this, the following are planned to support and meet the requirements of Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing aspect of RSE.

- **Two hours of physical activity**

Children participate in two hours of physical activity each week and learn about wellbeing through a focus on *heart, mind, body and soul*: Heart (relationships, compassion); Mind (positive attitude, problem solving); Body (health, sports science); Soul ( self-reflection)

- **Wellbeing Lunch Clubs**

One of the Wellbeing Lunch Club's themes supports our PH&MW education: Self-esteem and understanding our feelings and emotions through Action for Happiness.

- **Wrenbury Walk**

At least three times weekly, each class will undertake a Wrenbury Walk around the school grounds; this provides them with a calming, sensory walk and time to talk to their peers and/or their teacher/

- **Health and Well-being Week**

The school's annual Health and Wellbeing Week involves the school inviting health and well-being visitors into school to lead sessions or groups and year groups/cohorts of children going out into our local community to experience different activities that promote not only physical well-being but also mental well-being. An introduction to a range of activities to support good mental health and wellbeing are undertaken including yoga, bowling and personal fitness. These also introduce the children to new hobbies and pursuits. We work closely with the staff at Wrenbury doctor's surgery, with children visiting the surgery for a range of health talks and/or staff leading sessions in school (including basic first aid). We also collaborate with Wrenbury Nursing Home as part of Compassionate Communities.

### **Sex Education**

The Science curriculum, as detailed in the National curriculum, forms the basis of our Sex Education at Wrenbury.

#### **Key Stage 1 (age 5-7 years)**

Year 1 pupils should be taught to:

- 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 pupils should be taught to:

- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene

#### **Key Stage 2 (age 7-11 years)**

Year 5 pupils should be taught to:

- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals

Year 6 pupils should be taught to:

- recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

We supplement the Science curriculum with matter of fact, 'Growing up' talks in Years 5 and 6, tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils, delivered by the school nurse (and attended by a staff member). Parents are informed as to when these talks are to take place and, whilst we would strongly recommend all Y5 and 6 children to attend these, parents are able to ask for their child not to attend these talks.

RSE is also covered through other curriculum subjects including computing lessons using established websites and teaching programmes such as *uthinkuknow* – teaching pupils how to be safe online at an appropriate age.

Visits and visitors are also organised to support the RSE curriculum at Wrenbury.

## Answering Children's Questions:

1. We are aware that children are likely to have many questions that may occur at any time. Children tend to ask whatever is on their mind. We see this as a positive point and a sign that we have created a safe environment where children feel empowered to feed their natural curiosity and learn about themselves, their bodies and the world around them. However, we acknowledge that some parents may feel uncomfortable about how particular questions may be dealt with in class.
2. We believe children are better off receiving honest, open answers from safe adults in their lives, rather than it being left to the internet or older children with a smart phone. In the age of information, where children in primary school have access to tablets, smart phones and the internet (often unsupervised), it is essential that we help children to recognise they are able to ask questions without judgement rather than searching for answers on the internet.
3. By tackling these topics in a matter of fact manner, without embarrassment means that we take the mystic allure out of the topic. For children, asking questions are simply signs of a healthy and natural curiosity and should not be deemed as rude. We can stop the topic becoming taboo and embarrassing and removing the stigma before it has had chance to form if we answer their questions in a matter of fact way.
4. We believe that if children ask a question they deserve an answer. If ignored they merely build unnecessary barriers, making children think they have done something wrong; they are then unlikely to ask again, and are instead left to seek their answers from less reliable or child friendly sources, due to shame. However uncomfortable the question may be, the thought is already in their head. It is much better that we, as safe adults, take responsibility and tackle the question safely and age appropriately.
5. Staff know how to deal with children's questions age appropriately and this is done consistently across the school as follows:
  - Children will be praised for asking questions. We wish to encourage children to seek answers from safe adults.
  - If a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group.
  - However, as with any other subject, there may occasionally be the need to differentiate depending on children's knowledge and experience. Some children may need additional information or support compared to others.
  - If a child asks a question that is not necessarily suitable for the entire class, we will respond, by saying: "That is a fantastic question, hold that thought, I am going to set everyone some work and I will come and talk to you and answer your question in a minute when everyone else is working."
  - If the member of staff doesn't have an answer or doesn't know, they will say so. There is no shame in not knowing the answer but the member of staff should make an effort to help the child to find the answer later.
  - If the member of staff is not sure how best to answer a particularly tricky question, our suggested response is: "That is a brilliant question, I would like to give you an equally brilliant answer, so let me have a think about it and, once I know the best way to explain it

clearly, I will come back to you”. This will allow teaching staff time to think, seek help, advice or support from colleagues, or to speak to senior management.

- If a child asks a question we know parents may be uncomfortable with, staff may choose to delay answering the question (as above) until they have spoken to the parent/carer if possible and talk through their response.
- Teachers will answer questions, openly, honestly, scientifically and factually without relying on their own personal beliefs. Teachers will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their pupils that could make either parties vulnerable.

### **Parents and parental rights to withdraw**

We believe that successful teaching around RSE can only take place when parents and school work together. We both want children to grow up safe and happy in healthy relationships, with the ability to manage their emotions and speak up when they feel unsafe. Therefore, we are committed to working together with parents.

We endeavour to be transparent and give parents information about all the programmes and lessons we deliver around RSE as we recognise it can be a sensitive subject for some families for a number of reasons.

All new parents to our school will be given information about the RSE we deliver as part of their induction to the school, including information of how they can get a copy of this policy. We recognise the importance of parents knowing about the content of the lessons so they can carry on the conversations at home and have an opportunity to talk to their children about their own families, beliefs and values.

We recognise under the new draft guidance for Relationship Education, Relationship & Sex education and Health Education (DfE 2018), parents retain the right to request their child is removed from some or all of the elements of sex education which go beyond the national curriculum for science. Maintained schools are required to teach about the main external body parts and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty. **There is no right to withdraw from the national curriculum.**

Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in lessons, we would ask that they first speak to their classroom teacher to discuss their concerns. Our teachers will happily show parents all the teaching material and context of any of our lessons and explain the reasons why any material is included in the programme. We will also highlight that whilst parents have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons, they do not have the right to withdraw other children from receiving these lessons. We believe it is better for children to hear from safe adults than to hear second hand from their class-mates at break-time.

If parents do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the head who will find other provision for the child to engage in during the lesson. Currently, head teachers must comply with requests to withdraw from any non-statutory lessons in the programme.

### **Policy on Menstruation**

We recognise that the onset of menstruation can be a confusing or distressing time for children if they are not prepared. As a school we acknowledge we have a responsibility to prepare children for menstruation and make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help children manage their period. Especially children whose family may not be able to afford or will not provide sanitary products.

We recognise that period poverty exists in the UK and that some children are forced to avoid attending school if they are on their period, when they are unable to manage it sensitively. We do not want that to be the case in our school and will make every reasonable effort to support children to access their education and enjoy school.

Puberty is occurring earlier than ever before, and it is now not uncommon for children to start their periods whilst in primary school. For this reason we deliver puberty lessons to all children in years 5 and 6. As part of these lessons children will be told about menstruation and there will be discussion of what periods are, explanation of other symptoms associated with periods, how they can be managed hygienically and sensitively. We are also aware that some children may start their periods slightly earlier and work with parents to support them in school.

Menstruation should not be something that a person is made to feel embarrassed or shameful of or be teased about as it is a normal, healthy, biological function. As a school, we need to treat each other with respect and empathy and this includes changes that take place during puberty such as menstruation.

During lessons where puberty and menstruation are discussed, we will take the opportunity to highlight the location of sanitary bins available in school, and how these are to be used. In school we have a menstruation kit available, which contains sanitary products, spare underwear and plastic bags to wrap up underwear should there have been any accidents. Children will be made aware of where these are kept and how they can be accessed through designated members of staff, including lunchtime supervisors.

When school trips or residential visits are arranged for years 4, 5 and 6, provisions to deal with a child's period needs to be considered and added to the risk assessment and planned for.

### **Safeguarding Children:**

When teaching any sensitive topic, such as RSE which deals with family life, safe and appropriate touching, personal body parts, healthy relationships and keeping safe online, we recognise the potential to uncover incidents of abuse through children's disclosures.



All members of staff who deliver any of our RSE curriculum, have statutory training around safeguarding children and are all aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern.

We recognise that for children who may be vulnerable due to past or present abuse or changes in family situations, there may be the need to adapt the content delivery or offer additional support. Furthermore, lesson content may help them make sense of their experiences, prevent further abuse and help them develop skills and resilience to keep them safe in future.

**Monitoring & Evaluation:**

SLT will monitor the provision of RSE across the school. This will be completed a minimum of once a term and will include learning walks, CPD and pupil perceptions. Pupil Voice will be used to monitor the progress of pupil's understanding of RSE.

**Consultation**

Policy agreed following consultation with parents, pupils, staff and governing body: **DATE 6-24 July 2020**

**Review:**

This policy will be reviewed **every 2 years** to ensure that it reflects the attitudes and beliefs of the school population and remains up to date with both current guidance from Government and the DfE but also remains relevant to the experiences of our pupils.

*This policy will be available on the school website. A free copy can be requested at the school office.*