PENSHURST CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Policy Owner: Teaching and Learning Committee	Next revision due: Summer 2027	Review period: Annual
Approved by the Governing Body on 16th July 2026 Signed by the Chair of Governors: …… Signed by the Headteacher: ……..		

Vision Statement:

At Penshurst CE Primary School we support our pupils to be 'Good Samaritans' who walk in the shoes of others; our Christian Values promote living life in its fullness. We prioritise the well-being of our school community and encourage our pupils to feel comfortable with who they are. Our local community is important to us; we care for both the people and the environment. We also think about how our actions touch the lives of those in the wider world.
Our rich curriculum inspires our school community to have a love of life-long learning and to strive for excellence in all we do. We support pupils to enable them to flourish and to always aim high.
Living Well Together – Learning and Growing with God

Safeguarding Statement

At Penshurst CE Primary School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Penshurst CE Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

Equality Statement

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Aims

The aim of relationships education at Penshurst CE Primary School is to help pupils develop self-respect, confidence and empathy. Pupils will learn about what makes healthy relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in a way that is age appropriate and sensitive to their faith. This will include online relationships, and how to seek help if they feel unsafe. Teaching will respect the diversity of families in our community.
Relationships education is not about sexual relationships. Through the school's vision 'walking in the shoes of others' we will encourage children to think beyond their own situation and take into account what life might be like for others. At Penshurst CE Primary we also aim to ensure pupils are comfortable in themselves and can live life in its fullness.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents as required by the Department for Education. We are committed to on-going consultation with families and stakeholders throughout the evolution of our school's relationships education programme. This process involved the following steps:
Review – a working group pulled together all relevant information including national and local guidance
Staff consultation – staff had the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to work with us on the policy, look at examples of resources, and make recommendations
Pupil consultation – we spoke to pupils about the skills they would like to learn

Statutory Requirements

Relationships education is compulsory in primary schools from 2021, so all pupils must take part in these lessons. Sex education is not compulsory for primary schools, however, we believe that pupils will benefit from receiving these lessons and therefore, pupils will learn about puberty in Years 4, 5 and 6. These lessons will be delivered by the class teacher and supported by the school nurse or other medical professional. Pupils are now able to access information from a variety of sources (which are not all accurate); at Penshurst CE Primary School we wish all children to be well informed and able to make informed choices.

Delivery of relationships education

Relationships education will be inclusive for all pupils, sensitive to all family and faith backgrounds and pupils' own identities. It will be respectful of all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported to develop the following skills as appropriate to their age:

- Communication skills
- Forming positive relationships including self-respect as well as respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness and managing conflict and difficult emotions

These skills are taught within the context of family life and friendships, in an age appropriate way. The school environment will reflect, value and celebrate the diversity of friendships and relationships. Lessons will be delivered by school staff with recommend resources from The PSHE Association.

Children will sometimes ask questions pertaining to relationships, sex or sexuality that go beyond what is set out in the curriculum. If questions go unanswered by school staff, children may turn to inappropriate sources of information including the internet. We will answer any questions in a way that is sensitive to children's family and faith backgrounds, appropriate to their age and understanding, and consistent with the relationships education policy and scheme of work. This may necessitate discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups, as not every child in a class will have the same type of questions. We may contact parents if we need guidance about a child's needs or if we think a child would benefit from their parents' input around a particular issue.

The Department for Education (DfE) has set out guidance on what children must learn by the end of year 6, under a series of themes. The statutory content as written by the DfE is set out below. Some themes will recur throughout school while others will be taught in the most appropriate years.

<u>Families and people who care for me</u>

Families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
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 live
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
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

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
Characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
Healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
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
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
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

People sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
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
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)
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
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 source

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body
The Governing Body will consider and approve the relationships education policy, and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation. At Penshurst CE Primary the policy will be overseen by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that relationships education is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory sex education lessons, if applicable.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering relationships in a sensitive way, taking account of pupils' family and faith backgrounds
- Modelling positive attitudes to relationships education, as with any other subject
- Monitoring children's learning in order to ensure they make progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory sex education lessons, if applicable.
- Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching relationships education. Staff who have concerns about teaching this subject are encouraged to seek support.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in relationships education lessons and treat others with respect and sensitivity, as we expect all the time in school.

Parents' right to withdraw their children from lessons

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education lessons taught as part of the relationships education or PSHE curriculum. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the head teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's file so that parents' wishes are on record. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education. Primary schools are required to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum and there continues to be no right to withdraw from these lessons.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of relationships education as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.
The Headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE. The sessions delivered by outside visitors will be consistent with our policy on relationships education.