



**Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy**

Yew Tree Farm School  
Bredgar and Wormshill Light Railway  
Swanton Street  
Sittingbourne  
ME9 8AT

Date - 22/01/24

Reviewed by - Edwina Grix

Next review date - 22/01/25

## **Content and Rationale**

This policy covers our school's approach to the curriculum content and teaching methods of our PSHE offering. Consultation took the form of discussions with key members of the executive board (Dr Abie Alfrey - clinical psychologist).

Upon enrolment at our school we will consult with students to identify what is important for them, and what gaps they have in their knowledge and use this to shape our curriculum offering. Furthermore, we will take a sensitive approach to curriculum design for children that have suffered trauma, and will consult further with experts to develop schemes of learning that can support them.

This policy is available for parents and carers to view on our website, or we can provide them with a copy upon request.

## **Aims**

The aims of PSHE and RSE at Yew Tree Farm School are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare learners for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help learners develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Prepare students for life in the wider world
- Help students to feel confident and knowledgeable in settings away from the farm
- Allow students the opportunity to ask difficult questions

Our PSHE program is underpinned by the school values of kindness, perseverance, high expectations and developing a sense of identity.

PSHE is a big part of our curriculum offer at Yew Tree Farm School, with half an hour each day focused on the subject. Additionally, our learning expectations, which uphold our behaviour policy, have strong links to the PSHE curriculum.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The Executive Board:

The Executive Board will work with the headteacher to develop and amend this PSHE and RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. The board will provide expert feedback on legislation and trauma informed practice and conduct monitoring visits.

## **The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that PSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw learners from non-statutory components of RSE.

## **Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering PSHE and RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to PSHE and RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual learners
- Responding appropriately to learners whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

### **Learners**

Learners are expected to engage fully in PSHE and RSE and, when discussing sensitive issues to treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Student voice will be used to review and tailor our PSHE programme and will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities.

### **Policy development**

This policy will be reviewed as part of a consultation with staff, learners and parents. The consultation and the policy development process will involve the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation – all school staff will be given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties will be invited to attend a meeting about the policy.
4. Learner consultation – we will investigate what exactly learners want from their RSE and PSHE
5. Ratification – once amendments are made, the policy will be shared with the Executive Board and ratified.

We are committed to working with parents and carers to develop a PSHE curriculum that works for our students. We will publish materials for parents and carers to explore with their children at home on our website; including information and guidance materials from relevant organisations.

### **Learning Environment and Timetabling**

PSHE is taught through open and engaging discussions each day during coffee break around the campfire. Students feel safe and secure with their class group and the teaching staff that they know and trust. PSHE becomes a stabilising part of a student's routine, and they feel able to reflect on previous topics as well as exploring new learning.

Thirty minutes of curriculum time each day is allocated entirely to PSHE, with the themes carrying on through other learning throughout the day.

Clear ground rules, based on respect, are discussed and agreed upon by students and staff and reiterated before each session. These will include rules around confidentiality.

We will ensure that where pupils indicate that they may be vulnerable and at risk or make a disclosure, they will get appropriate support through the following of the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Students' questions will be answered honestly and openly when possible. Staff will feel able to ask a student to wait for an answer whilst they consult with the headteacher, and work with colleagues to construct an appropriate answer. There will be an anonymous question box available for students to use when they do not feel comfortable asking their question in an open setting.

### **Inclusivity**

We will teach PSHE in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of learners will relate to the curriculum and takes into account the age, ability, readiness and cultural background of students
- Is sensitive to all learners' experiences and remains trauma informed, offering bespoke schemes to students that need it
- Promotes the needs and interests of all pupils, irrespective of gender, culture, ability or personal circumstance
- Meets the needs of students with SEND and takes into account EHCP targets and individual needs and differences

This will be achieved with high staff ratios, high quality staff training, ongoing consultation with experts, monitoring from the headteacher and Executive Board and ongoing formative assessment.

## **Curriculum**

Refer to Appendix 1 for the full progression map.

Each topic will be started by assessing students' prior knowledge, allowing the scheme of work to be adapted to the needs of the learners, and enabling teachers to make more effective judgments of students' development and progression in learning. We will determine students' starting points through open conversations with them, informal quizzes and targeted questioning.

We will ensure that sessions, including those on risky behaviours, remain positive in tone through the safe and secure learning environment and the presence of well known and trusted staff.

We will help students make connections between their learning and 'real life' behaviours by using the unique environment and resources available to us on the farm. Additionally, we will plan outings to the onsite tea room and eventually further afield for students to put their learning into practice.

There are strong links between our PSHE curriculum and our Farming curriculum, enabling learning to be revisited frequently and in a real life situation. The fireside PSHE discussion can be continued into the day's Farming session, with students demonstrating their knowledge. Our Farming curriculum covers many of the ethical considerations of raising livestock, as well as managing money, keeping animals healthy, treating them with respect and the process of breeding. Breeding on the farm will be approached inline with our RSE programme, taking into account students' individual needs and personal situations.

Our curriculum is taught through a 'spiral programme', with the learning organised into a series of recurring themes which students experience every year. At each encounter, the level of demand increases and learning is progressively deepened.

## **Assessment**

We will assess students' learning and progression against the curriculum aims through targeted questioning, informal quizzes and group discussions. Assessment data is recorded using B squared software and analysed termly to ensure students are making good progress.

## **Links to Other Policies and Areas of the Curriculum**

This policy supports the following policies:

Child protection and safeguarding

Anti-bullying

SMSC

Equality and diversity

Behaviour

## Curriculum

The learning in PSHE sessions will link to learning in:

Farming

PE

Topic (including RE and IT)

Science

## RSE Teaching:

### Statutory Requirements

As a Independent Special School, we must provide relationships education to all learners under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017 \(Section 34\)](#)

We are not required to provide sex education, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#)

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010)
- Keeping Children Safe In Education 2020 (updated 2021)

### Definition

- RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of learners, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, 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.

### Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum as set out in Appendix 1. Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other

structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

PSHE ground rules will be reviewed and amended where appropriate for RSE topics to allow for a safe learning environment. Student questions will be answered by staff where possible and appropriate, but staff may ask students to wait whilst they consult with colleagues to construct a suitable answer. Sensitive issues will be handled using distancing techniques so students do not have to share their personal experience, which may potentially be traumatic or challenging. Instead, we will use characters, case studies, fictional scenarios or videos to explore a topic; and where appropriate use resources on the farm.

### **Use of resources**

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our learners
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to learners' experiences and won't provoke distress

### **Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

Alternative school work will be given to learners who are withdrawn from sex education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

### **Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE 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.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery and content of the RSE programme is monitored by the headteacher through monitoring arrangements, such as planning scrutinies, & learning walks. This is backed up by visits from the Executive Board and consulting experts.

Learners' development in RSE is monitored by staff as part of our internal assessment systems and logged on the B squared assessment system.

Students will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons through open conversation and informal quizzes.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Executive Board and the Headteacher.

**Appendix 1:**

Twinkl progression map to be attached!

## Appendix 2

Parent Form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

Name of Child		Age	
Name of Parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent Signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	