



# Relationships Education and Health Education (RHE) Policy

Revised: February 2024

To be reviewed: February 2027

## Introduction

At The Pioneer Academy, we understand that pupils must be provided with an education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. A key part of this relates to relationship and health education, which must be delivered to every primary-aged pupil.

The relationships and health curriculum has been organised in line with the statutory requirements outlined in the DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance, which states that:

*'... primary schools should teach about relationships and health, including puberty. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals.'*

This statutory guidance states that by the end of primary school, pupils should know that families are important and that they can "sometimes look different" and that those differences should be respected. Pupils should know that "stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families".

Relationships education focuses on giving pupils the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy. Health education focuses on equipping pupils with the knowledge they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.

We understand our responsibility to deliver a high-quality, age-appropriate and evidence-based relationships, sex and health curriculum for all our pupils. This policy sets out the framework for our relationships and health curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered.

This policy applies to all staff, governors and trustees.

## Roles and responsibilities

The **school board** is responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.

- Ensuring the curriculum is well led, effectively managed and well planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Providing clear information for parents on subject content and their rights to request that their children are withdrawn.
- Making sure the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

The **Head Teacher or Head of School** is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects.
- Ensuring that parents are fully informed of this policy.
- Reviewing requests from parents to withdraw their children from the subjects.
- Discussing requests for withdrawal with parents.
- Organising alternative education for pupils, where necessary, that is appropriate and purposeful.
- Reporting to the school board on the effectiveness of this policy.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

The **PSHE subject leader** is responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of the subjects.
- Ensuring the subjects are age-appropriate and high-quality.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the subjects.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to the relationships and health curriculum.
- Ensuring the relationships and health curriculum is inclusive and accessible for all pupils.
- Working with other subject leaders to ensure the relationships and health curriculum complements, but does not duplicate, the content covered in the national curriculum.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the Head Teacher or Head of School.

**All teachers** are responsible for:

- Delivering a high-quality and age-appropriate relationships and health curriculum in line with statutory requirements.
- Using a variety of teaching methods and resources to provide an engaging curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the programme.
- Modelling positive attitudes to relationships and health education.
- Responding to any safeguarding concerns in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Acting in accordance with planning, monitoring and assessment requirements for the subjects.
- Liaising with the SENDCo to identify and respond to individual needs of pupils with SEND.
- Working with the PSHE subject leader to evaluate the quality of provision.

The **SENDCo** is responsible for:

- Advising teaching staff how best to identify and support pupils' individual needs.

- Advising staff on the use of TAs in order to meet pupils' individual needs

## Organisation of the curriculum

Every primary school is required to deliver statutory relationships education and health education.

For the purpose of this policy, "**relationships education**" is defined as teaching pupils about healthy, respectful relationships, focussing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online, as well as developing an understanding of human sexuality in Year 6.

For the purpose of this policy, "**health education**" is defined as teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing, focussing on recognising the link between the two and being able to make healthy lifestyle choices.

The delivery of the relationships education and health education coincide with one another and will be delivered as part of the school's **PSHE curriculum**.

The relationships and health curriculum has been organised in line with the statutory requirements outlined in the DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance.

The relationships and health curriculum takes into account feedback from teachers, pupils and parents. We are dedicated to ensuring our curriculum meets the needs of the whole-school community.

The relationships and health curriculum is informed by the school context, local community and wider global issues to ensure it is tailored to pupils' needs; for example, **supporting pupils to understand the implications of COVID-19 for themselves and their families**, our curriculum would be tailored to address this issue.

The school has organised a curriculum that is age-appropriate for pupils within each year group, based on the views of teachers, parents and pupils.

## Consultation

Any parent, teacher or pupil wishing to provide feedback about this curriculum can do so at any time during the academic year by Organising a meeting with the Head Teacher by contacting the school office.

The school understands the important role parents play in enhancing their children's understanding of relationships and health. Similarly, we also understand how important parents' views are in shaping the curriculum.

Parents are provided with the following information, so that they can support their child at home:

- The content of the relationships and health curriculum
- The delivery of the relationships and health curriculum, including what is taught in each year group

## **The Right to Withdraw a child from sex education sessions**

All pupils must be taught the aspects of sex education outlined in the primary National Curriculum for science this includes:

- teaching about the main external parts of the human body, how it changes as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty,
- the reproductive process in some plants and animals.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from the additional sex education sessions delivered as part of statutory RSE. Across TPA, we teach pupils sex education in upper key stage 2. This includes more detailed guidance on puberty, including menstruation, which takes pupils' learning beyond what is required of the science curriculum.

Parents will be invited to review the resources and plans for these more specific sessions, so that any decision to withdraw their child from these sessions is based on a full understanding of the subject matter being introduced.

Across The Pioneer Academy, the Head Teachers adhere to the DfE advice:

*'... the Head Teacher should discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher. Although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead.'*

The school aims to build positive relationships with parents by inviting them into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help parents in managing conversations with their children on the issues covered by this policy.

## **Relationships Education Overview**

### **Families and people who care for me**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- That families are important for them growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- The 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 lives.
- That 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.
- That 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.
- That 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**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- That most friendships have ups and downs, but 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.
- How to manage conflict.
- How to manage different situations and how to seek help from others if needed.

### **Respectful relationships**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.
- Which 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.
- That in school and 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.
- About the different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying to an adult, and how to seek help.
- What a stereotype is, and how they can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

### **Online relationships**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone they are not.
- That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online, even when we are anonymous.
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online.
- How to recognise harmful content and contact online, and how to report these.

- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information.
- The risks associated with people they have never met.
- How information and data is shared and used online.

### **Being safe**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others – including in a digital context.
- About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults.
- That it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- That 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) who 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 and 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 seek advice, for example, from their family, their school and other sources.

### **Relationships education per year group**

The school always considers the age and development of pupils when deciding what will be taught in each year group.

The school plans a progressive curriculum, such that topics are built upon prior knowledge taught in previous years as they progress through school to provide a smooth transition to secondary school.

## **Health Education Overview**

The focus at primary level is teaching the characteristics of good physical, emotional and mental health wellbeing.

### **Emotional and Mental wellbeing**

By the end of primary school pupils will know:

- That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- That there is a normal range of emotions, e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and nervousness.
- The scale of emotions that humans experience in response to different experiences and situations.
- How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, and voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, and the benefits of hobbies and interests.

- How isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important they discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), extending to who in school they should speak to if they are worried about themselves or others.
- That it is common to experience mental ill health and, for the many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

### **Internet safety and harms**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- That for most people, the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- About the benefits of rationing time spent online.
- The risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices.
- The impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others.
- How to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
- The importance of keeping personal information private.
- Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age-restricted.
- That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- How to be a discerning consumer of information online, including understanding that information (inclusive of that from search engines) is ranked, selected and targeted.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

### **Physical health and fitness**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this, for example by walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile, or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
- How and when to seek support, including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

### **Healthy eating**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- What constitutes a healthy diet, including an understanding of calories and other nutritional content.
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating, including obesity, and other behaviours, e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health.

### **Drugs alcohol and tobacco**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.

### **Health and prevention**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss or unexplained changes to the body.
- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health, and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria and viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of hand washing.
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.

### **Basic first aid**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

### **Changing adolescent body**

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- About menstrual wellbeing and key facts relating to the menstrual cycle.

### **Health education per year group**

The school always considers the age and development of pupils when deciding what will be taught in each year group.

The school plans a progressive curriculum, such that topics are built upon prior knowledge taught in previous years as they progress through school to provide a smooth transition to secondary school.

### **Sex Education**

All pupils must be taught the aspects of sex education outlined in the primary National Curriculum for science this includes:

- teaching about the main external parts of the human body, how it changes as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty,
- the reproductive process in some plants and animals.

Across TPA, we teach pupils sex education in upper key stage 2. This includes more detailed guidance on puberty, including menstruation, which takes pupils' learning beyond what is required of the science curriculum.

Parents will be invited to review the resources and plans for these more specific sessions, so that any decision to withdraw their child from these sessions is based on a full understanding of the subject matter being introduced. Head Teachers will discuss the request with the parents before agreeing to grant permission to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

## **Delivery of the curriculum**

The relationships and health curriculum will be delivered as part of our **PSHE curriculum**.

Through effective organisation and delivery of the subject, we will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.
- The curriculum is delivered proactively, such that it addresses issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on children's physical, emotional and sexual development.
- Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly the Equality Act (2010), so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.
- The school ensures that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages of the pupils, their developmental stages and any additional needs they may have.
- Lesson plans will provide appropriate challenge for pupils and be differentiated for pupils' needs.
- Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning.
- Inappropriate images, videos, etc., will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age, developmental stage and cultural background of pupils.
- Pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in the school's E-safety Policy.
- Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings, and alter their teaching of the programme accordingly.
- Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriate to the pupil's age.

- The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to ensure both are actively involved, matching their different learning styles.
- Teachers will focus heavily on the importance of marriage and healthy relationships, though sensitivity will always be given as to not stigmatise pupils based on their home circumstances.
- Teachers will ensure that lesson plans are centred around reducing stigma, particularly in relation to mental wellbeing, and encouraging openness through discussion activities and group work.
- Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.
- Any resources or materials used to support learning will be formally assessed by the PSHE subject leader before use to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, and sensitive to their needs.
- In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that pupils may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.
- At all points of delivery of this programme, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how, will be planned in conjunction with parents.
- Whilst there are no formal examinations for the relationships and health curriculum, the school will undertake informal assessments to determine pupil progress.

### **Working with external experts**

External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the programme and will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

The school will ensure all visitor credentials are checked before they are able to participate in delivery of the curriculum, in line with the Visitor Policy.

The school will ensure that the teaching delivered by the external expert fits with the planned curriculum and this policy.

Before delivering the session, the school will discuss the details of the expert's lesson plan and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.

The school will also ask to see the materials the expert intends to use, as well as a copy of the lesson plan, to ensure it meets all pupils' needs, including those with SEND.

The school will agree with the expert the procedures for confidentiality, ensuring that the expert understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The intended use of external experts is to enhance the curriculum delivered by teachers, rather than as a replacement for teachers.

## **Equality and accessibility**

The school understands its responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act ((2010)), specifically that it must not unlawfully discriminate against any pupil because of their:

- Age
- Sex or sexual orientation
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to promote accessibility and inclusivity of the curriculum.

The school understands that pupils with SEND or other needs (such as those with social, emotional or mental health needs) are entitled to learn about relationships and health education, and the programme will be designed to be inclusive of all pupils.

Teachers will understand that they may need to be more explicit and adapt their planning of work and teaching methods in order to appropriately deliver the programme to pupils with SEND or other needs.

Provisions under the Equality Act (2010) allow our school to take positive action, where it can be evidenced to be proportionate, to respond to particular disadvantages affecting a group because of a protected characteristic. For example, we could consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

When deciding whether support is necessary to support pupils with a particular protected characteristic, we will consider our pupils' needs, including the gender and age range of our pupils.

In order to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, the school implements a robust Behaviour Policy, as well as a Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which set out expectations of pupils.

## **Curriculum links**

The school seeks opportunities to draw links between relationships and health education and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning.

Relationships and health education will be linked to the following subjects in particular:

- **Science** – pupils learn about the main external parts of the body and changes to the body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty.

- **Computing and ICT** – pupils learn about e-safety, including how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private and how to access help and support.
- **PE** – pupils explore various physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and understand how exercise can lead to healthier lifestyles.
- **Citizenship** – pupils learn about the requirements of the law, their responsibilities and the possible consequences of their actions.
- **PSHE** – pupils learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.

### **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. We aim to foster a culture based on mutual respect and understanding for one another.

Any bullying incidents caused as a result of the relationships and health education programme, such as those relating to sexual orientation, will be dealt with as seriously as other bullying incidents within the school.

Any occurrence of these incidents will be reported to a member of school staff, who will then discipline the pupil once they are on school premises.

These incidents will be dealt with following the processes in our **Positive Relationships Policy** and **Anti Bullying Statement**.

The **Head Teacher** will decide whether it is appropriate to notify the police or an anti-social behaviour coordinator in their LA of the action taken against a pupil.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality within the classroom is an important component of relationships and health education, and teachers are expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils as far as is possible.

Teachers will, however, alert the Head Teacher or Head of School about any suspicions of inappropriate behaviour or potential abuse as per the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Pupils will be fully informed of the school's responsibilities in terms of confidentiality and will be aware of what action may be taken if they choose to report a concern or make a disclosure.

Any reports made during lessons, or as a result of the content taught through the curriculum, will be reported to the DSL and Deputy DSLs and handled in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Monitoring quality**

The **PSHE subject leader** is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for the subjects.

**Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed in light of any changes to statutory guidance, feedback from parents, staff or pupils, and issues in the school or local area that may need addressing.