

Hamstead Primary School

Relationships and Health Education Policy

Draft



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Review date: September 2026

Introduction

This is the policy of Hamstead Primary School on the approach taken to Relationships and Health Education, approved by Governors in February 2026 which provides guidance and information on all aspects of RHE in the school for staff, parents/carers and governors.

What is Relationship and Health Education? (Department for Education Guidance)

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education Regulations (England, 2019) have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and two characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils should be 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 should be taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

From the beginning, teachers should talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of safe and age-appropriate contexts should enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise and safeguard from any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers should address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers should include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online, for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

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, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures). Care needs to be 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, for example, looked after children or young carers.

Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.

Through RHE, schools should teach pupils the knowledge to safeguard themselves, for example, they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In primary schools, this can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages, it will be 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.

Legal Requirements

The law was changed with effect from September 2020 so that primary schools in England must teach relationships education and health education (The Children and Social Work Act 2017).

- The relationships education part of the new curriculum teaches what children need to learn to build positive and safe relationships with family and friends and online.
- The health education part of the new curriculum covers both physical health and mental wellbeing and teaches children how to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing; how to recognise issues in themselves and in others; and how to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, but:

- The new curriculum for relationships education and health education does include content on puberty.
- The national curriculum for science 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.

Following this change in the law, the Department for Education published Statutory Guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019). This guidance requires primary schools in England to have a written relationships education policy to cover the following:

- How relationships education is delivered
- What sex education (if any) a school chooses to cover that goes beyond the national curriculum for science and relationships education.

There is no equivalent requirement for a health education policy but, in line with best practice, this RHE policy also covers health education.

This RHE policy also supports legal requirements relating to the following:

- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Education Act 1996.
- Statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

The following policies are also relevant to this Relationships and Health Education policy:

- Anti-bullying
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Online safety

RHE Definition

RHE supports children and young people's personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It aims are to help children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes to keep themselves health and safe and to deal with real-life issues they face as they grow up and that they will encounter as adults. Their learning will support them both online and offline, to make informed choices about their safety, physical and mental health, enabling them to live positive and fulfilled lives.

RHE has an impact on both academic and non-academic outcomes for pupils. In order for children to embrace the challenges of creating happy and successful adult lives, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy. RHE provides the children with the building blocks in order for them to develop healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This sits alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy.

Aims

The aims of our RHE programme are:

- To develop a range of skills (language, decision making, recognising influences and assertiveness) and attributes they need to manage their lives now and in the future
- To raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others
- To develop skills for a healthier, safer lifestyle
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media
- To help children respect and care for their bodies
- To ensure children are prepared for puberty and adulthood
- To help children understand how to keep themselves safe
- To ensure children know how to report a concern/worry linked to safeguarding
- To tackle barriers to learning and raise aspirations for all of our pupils

Roles and Responsibilities.

An effective RHE programme requires support from the whole school community and the following people have specific roles and responsibilities:

The Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains responsible for the oversight of the curriculum and policies • Dealing with issues concerning parental right to withdrawal their child from the curriculum. • Supporting the subject leader to liaise with parents and carers • Providing training for the subject leader and staff, as required • Providing information to governors
Governing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfilling the legal obligations on the part of the school • Ensure pupils are making progress • The overall quality of the provision offered in the school.
DSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking policy for safeguarding compliance and dealing with safeguarding matters as and when they arise.
PSHE Subject Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the development and delivery of effective RHE • Keeping up to date with the development of RHE • Delivering training and resources to key members of staff and supporting colleagues as required • Monitoring and evaluating the subject and work with partners including safeguarding lead, external partner groups and individuals. • Overseeing external visitors and resources used in RSHE
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand and implement the policy of RHE • The delivery of lessons and key agreed RHE messages • Identifying and working with PSHE leads to address gaps in their knowledge • Respond to the needs of individual children
Parents / carers / guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in partnership with school - including being aware of school policies, ensuring schools are aware of issues arising around the wellbeing of their child and supporting learning within the home environment.
Pupils (where appropriate).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express the wishes of their peers and contribute ideas into the school curriculum (as part of pupil voice).

How RHE is taught at Hamstead Primary School

We teach RHE as part of a wider programme of PSHE education. We follow the KAPOW curriculum which purposefully links and sets out the safe, age-appropriate programmes of study that are based on the needs of our children. Discreet PSHE lessons are taught weekly which are then adapted, where appropriate, to meet the needs of the children. RHE will also be addressed through assemblies, class discussions/circle time, as and when issues arise, ensuring time is made within the curriculum to meet the needs of the children and through extra-curricular activities. The curriculum covers five different themes over the year which are as follows:

- Autumn 1 - Family and Relationships
- Autumn 2 – Health and Well-Being
- Spring 1 – Safety and the Changing Body
- Spring 2 - Careers
- Summer 1 – Citizenship
- Summer 2 – Economic Well-Being

The school seeks opportunities to draw links between RHE and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning. RHE 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: pupils learn about online 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.

British Values: 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.

We often enhance our curriculum using external visitors and focus days across the year. This may include:

- DECCA Assemblies/Workshops (Medicine in KS1, Tobacco in Year 3 and 4, ENDS in Year 5 and 6, Alcohol and Cannabis in Year 6 only)
- World Mental Health Day/Week
- First Aid Workshops
- Anti-bullying and online safety focus days

Teachers will select visitors in liaison with the subject leader and the school will ensure that:

- Visitors are used to enhance the lessons delivered by the class teacher, and information on where a visitor fits into the long-term plan will be shared with the visitor
- Visitors are aware of the school policy for RHE
- We check the content of sessions delivered by visitors to ensure it fits with the school's ethos and meets legal requirements.
- A member of staff will be present in sessions delivered

Teaching and Learning

As the subject deals with real-life experiences, it is important to establish a safe and positive learning environment using the following approaches:

- Establishing clear ground rules in consultation with children. Ground rules include confidentiality, respect for others, privacy and boundaries
- Using distancing techniques including de-personalised discussions and role play
- Using clear language to avoid misunderstandings
- Avoiding prejudice and assumptions about children's abilities, desires, background and experiences
- Dealing sensitively with unexcepted questions and comments
- Allowing time for reflection

Curriculum Content

The school has organised Relationships and Health Education (RHE) so that it is age-appropriate for pupils within each year group. RHE is taught by teachers and if appropriate, outside visitors such as a nurse, workshops or specialists. A range of teaching methods are used to teach RHE. These include use of discussion, books, looking at case studies, drama and role-play. All teaching is sensitive to the needs of the children and age range.

The school has chosen to use the KAPOW scheme of work, which provides full curriculum coverage, including all statutory content for each year group. Follow this link to view the [KAPOW Primary RHE curriculum overview](#).

Relationships Education Government Statutory Guidance states that:

<p>Families and people who care for me</p>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that families are important for children 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.
<p>Caring friendships</p>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, 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 5 from others, if needed.
<p>Respectful relationships</p>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • that 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. about 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.
<p>Online relationships</p>	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that people sometimes behave differently online, including by 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 including when we are anonymous. •the 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	Pupils should know: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; including 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) 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 sources
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Early Years and Foundation Stage

In Early Years, PSED (Personal, Social and Emotional Development) is a prime area of learning therefore an integral aspect of daily planning, teaching and learning. Early Years also follow the KAPOW scheme of learning and planning is adapted to reflect the interests of the children and the needs of the school. Children take part in circle time and discuss topics and themes that are at their level. PSED is a fundamental building block in a child's development and underpins the whole curriculum. Children in Early Years will cover the units:

- Self-regulation: My feelings
- Building relationships: Special relationships
- Managing self: Taking on challenges
- Self-regulation: Listening and following instructions
- Building relationships: My family and friends
- Managing self: My wellbeing

Equality

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school is under a legal duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between those with protected characteristics and those without. The protected characteristics are age, marriage and civil partnership, disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. In addition, the school must consider the needs of those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The RHE programme will meet the needs of all children. Lessons will include content that will tackle discrimination and foster good relationships.

Right to Withdraw from Sex Education

From September 2021 the Department for Education statutory guidance stated that all primary schools must deliver relationships and health education whereby parents cannot withdraw their child from this (until this time parents have the consent to withdraw their child from sex education).

A parent or carer does have the right to withdraw their child from sex education unless what is being taught is part of the science national curriculum.

The biological aspects of RHE are taught within the Science curriculum:

- describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird
- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals.
- describe the changes as humans develop to old age (including puberty)
- recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

Please note that Hamstead Primary School have made the decision to not teach the two lessons related to sex education in Year 6 (Lesson 5: Conception and Lesson 6: Pregnancy and Birth).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The headteacher and PSHE coordinator will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating RHE in line with other subjects. Monitoring and evaluating will take place through lesson observations, learning walks, evidence of learning and feedback from all stakeholders including pupil voice where appropriate.

The headteacher and subject leader will assess the professional development needs of staff regularly.

Safeguarding

All staff are trained in Safeguarding. Teachers are aware that effective RHE, 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. In this situation staff should follow internal safeguarding policies including informing the Safeguarding Lead.

There may be times when a pupil wishes to confide in a teacher. It is the school policy that information may need to be passed on to a Designated Safeguarding Lead if there is a risk of harm to the child. Pupils are informed that teachers cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. The Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide what action to take to protect the best interests of the child, enabling action to be taken by other professionals if deemed necessary.