

MERTON COURT SCHOOL



DRAFT - UNDER CONSULTATION

Relationships & Health Education Policy

To be reviewed July 2021 by: SMSC Co-ordinator, Headmaster, LT
Signed by the Headmaster/Proprietor:
Shared with staff:
Put on the Website:

THIS RELATIONSHIPS AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY APPLIES TO THE WHOLE SCHOOL

Legal Status: Complies with Part 2, paragraph 5 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.

Related policies and documents:

- Personal, Social, Health Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship
- Curriculum Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- RE Policy
- Science Policy

Documents that inform the school's Relationships & Health Education Policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2020)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

- Changes to the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education and PSHE: A call for evidence – The Church of England Education Office (2019)
 - Behaviour and Discipline in schools (2016)
 - SEND Code of Practice (2015)
 - SMSC requirements for Independent Schools (2019)

Availability: This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: it is available to staff on the shared Drive, and parents may request a copy from the School Office.

Monitoring and review: This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster. The Headmaster/Proprietor undertakes an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Relationships & Health Education

This policy covers our approach to Relationships & Health Education; a statutory component of PSHE, Citizenship taught at Merton Court as our 'LifeSkills' curriculum from September 2020. It aims to set out the purpose of Relationships & Health Education and the intended outcomes for pupils, what is covered in our curriculum and how it is delivered.

We define Relationships & Health Education as learning about the many strands of relationships and growing up. In our experience, young people most desire to learn about (and have modelled for them) good, healthy relationships. They want to learn how to secure, develop and sustain healthy relationships and how to be able to recognise when and how relationships go wrong. They must be prepared for the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of being in relationship with other people. Relationships education and RHE must give pupils the understanding, vocabulary and strategies they require to keep themselves safe and to thrive within good, stable long-term relationships of all kinds. RHE should give pupils accurate information to equip them for life in the modern world and to make sure they are not influenced by unrealistic dangerous materials.

Purpose and Principles

At our school, we believe in providing every pupil with open, honest, accurate and age-appropriate lessons all about relationships. Through the school's ethos and values, we aim to develop children's knowledge, skills, opinions, strategies and confidence - enabling them to cope with life and live safely and happily in the modern world. As a Christian school, we believe RHE is about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, healthy relationships, human sexuality and sexual health. It is also about the spiritual and moral aspects of relationships within a context of a Christian vision for the purpose of life.

We highly value the partnership between school and home and will promote open and informative two-way communication. We aim to provide parents and carers with accurate information about what their child is learning in school and to provide the best learning environment and opportunities for our children.

Our Relationships & Health Education curriculum is inclusive and meets the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Through our comprehensive Relationships & Health Education provision, we aim to provide all pupils with:

- the knowledge and understanding of a variety of relationships;
- the ability to identify any concerns they have about a relationship;
- coping strategies and an awareness of how and where to seek support;
- an understanding of their rights and responsibilities within a range of relationships;
- an awareness of the process of growing up and the changes they and others will experience;
- an understanding of the characteristics of positive relationships.
- an understanding of the Christian understanding of marriage as the context for sexual relationships and the importance of trust, loyalty, fidelity and choice as well as the understanding of abstinence and celibacy as positive life choices.

The focus at Merton Court will be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and 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. Building on their early education, pupils will 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.

Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary school.

Respect for others will 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 will 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 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 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 will 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 in their many forms, provide a nurturing environment for children. 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.

A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as 'virtues') in the individual. In a school wide context which encourages the development and practice of resilience and other attributes, this includes character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils should develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

Relationships & Health 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 Relationships & Health Education, Merton Court will teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. 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 will 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. These subjects are part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach and this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

Statutory Regulations

From September 2020, all primary schools must deliver Relationships & Health Education. Under the Education Act 2002/Academies Act 2010, all schools must provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Relationships & Health Education programme in our school will be led by our SMSC Coordinator and our Pastoral Coordinator, to cover both the relationships and sex education (academic) aspects.

All staff members involved in teaching and supporting the Relationships & Health Education curriculum will be trained and supported by the SMSC & Pastoral Coordinators.

Our Relationships & Health Education Curriculum

Our inclusive Relationships curriculum supports the objectives set out by the PSHE Association which meet the statutory requirements for Key Stage 1 and 2. It forms a core part of our comprehensive Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum, which we describe as 'LifeSkills'.

Our Relationships Scheme of Work can be found by noting which lessons are annotated as being part of our RSE curriculum. Learning in Relationships Education lessons will link to learning in Year 5/Year 6 science as well as PSHE. A list of the documents containing these lessons can be found below:

- PSHE Scheme of Work and Year 5/Year 6 Science

Our lessons will be differentiated where appropriate, ensuring all children are able to participate fully. Children will be given the opportunity throughout the units of work to reflect on and evaluate their learning - assessment opportunities are built in to every lesson.

Relationships and Health Education complement several national curriculum subjects. Merton Court teaches the national curriculum and looks for opportunities to draw links between the subjects and integrate teaching where appropriate. There continues to be no right of withdrawal from any part of the national curriculum.

In the Junior School and Senior School, the science curriculum includes teaching about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty.

Our computing curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including logic, algorithms and data representation. It also covers e-safety, with progression in the content to reflect the different and escalating risks that young people face as they get older. This includes how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private, and where to go for help and support.

The PE curriculum aims to ensure that pupils develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and activities and lead healthy, active lives.

Relationships and Health Education complement our existing curriculum and the whole school approach to wellbeing and health. For example, health education can complement what is taught through PE by developing core knowledge and broader understanding that enables people to lead healthy, active lives and citizenship can complement all of the new subjects in the coverage of law. Merton Court tailors its curriculum to meet the needs of all the pupils.

Delivering the Curriculum

Our PSHE lessons are taught by form teachers who are trained in delivering the specific content of the lessons. Ground rules will be established in class and children reminded of these. Special consideration will be given when teaching particularly sensitive content and staff will be fully aware of the children in their class and how they might relate to the lesson content.

We aim to create and maintain a safe environment within which all children feel able to ask questions and discuss issues openly. For any child wishing to discuss something confidential, relating to the lesson content, an opportunity will be provided.

Each Year 5 and Year 6 class also has a question box, which gives children the option to write down their questions and receive an answer on a one-to-one basis, rather than in front of the whole class. This also means that children are able to discuss fictional characters and scenarios, rather than discuss their own lives and experiences.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Relationships and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who represent a large minority of pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.

The School is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships & Health Education can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example, those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors will be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects.

There may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. As with all teaching for these subjects, Merton Court will ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting

Self-assessment is an important part of learning in Relationships Education and PSHE. Children will reflect on their learning throughout the units. We highly value pupil voice and will take into account the opinions and comments of our children about what they would like to learn.

Staff delivering the Relationships & Health curriculum will critically reflect on their teaching and best practice will be shared through lesson observations, monitoring of planning and children's work and training opportunities.

Comments on children's learning and progress in Relationships & Health Education, as part of their learning in PSHE, will be reported to parents and carers through termly reports and parent evenings.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, 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 instance, teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead and in her absence, their deputy.

DSL / Pastoral Coordinator, Mrs A Macdonald

DDSL / Headmaster/Proprietor, Mr D Price

Visitors and external agencies which support the delivery of Relationships & Health Education will be required to adhere to the school's safeguarding policy and policies relating to the subjects they are teaching or contributing towards.

Parents and carers have the legal right to withdraw their child from all or part of sex education taught as part of statutory Relationships & Health Education, with the exception of the objectives included in National Curriculum science. Those considering this option are asked to speak with the Director of Studies in order to find out more.