

**Relationships Education,  
Health Education and Sex Education  
at Pelynt Primary Academy**

Information for parents and carers

**Our approach to PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education)** is a teaching and learning programme which includes the statutory RSHE (Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education) and has a strong focus on emotional and mental health and wellbeing.

We believe that this work is vital to support children’s development and to underpin their learning capacity, and that it is most effective when parents and carers work in partnership with the school.

We, like parents and carers, want children to be safe, healthy and happy. We will be respectful of the faith, beliefs and contexts of children’s families, engaging with parents and carers. Children’s safety and wellbeing is paramount and we must fulfil their statutory duties.

**What are the aims of Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education in the primary school?**

The opening paragraph of the Department for Education guidance states:

*“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.”*

*(DfE, 2019, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education)*

**What must primary schools teach in Relationships Education, Health Education and Sex Education?**

Relationships and Health Education are compulsory in all primary schools in England. For primary aged children this includes curriculum content under two headings (DfE 2019):

Relationships Education	Health Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families and people who care for me</li> <li>• Caring Friendships</li> <li>• Respectful Relationships</li> <li>• Online Relationships</li> <li>• Being safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental wellbeing</li> <li>• Internet safety and harms</li> <li>• Physical health and fitness</li> <li>• Healthy Eating</li> <li>• Drugs, alcohol and tobacco</li> <li>• Health and prevention</li> <li>• Basic first aid</li> <li>• Changing adolescent body</li> </ul>

This DfE guidance clearly states the statutory requirements, i.e. what children **MUST** be taught by the end of primary school. Health Education includes learning about ‘the changing adolescent body’ to equip children to understand and cope with puberty.

The **National Curriculum for Science** (also a compulsory subject), includes learning the correct names for the main external body parts, learning about the human body as it grows from birth to old age and reproduction in some plants and animals. (which could include human beings).

Relationships Education, Health Education and Science are compulsory subjects that must be taught at school. The DfE recommends, ‘that all primary schools should have a Sex Education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.’ Parents/carers can view our PSHE policy on our website, for further information. We gathered parental feedback in October 2020 when compiling this policy inline with our programme of study.

Our programme includes lessons on ALL aspects of compulsory Relationships and Health Education, designed in a sensitive, spiral, age-appropriate curriculum. It also has a few lessons on human reproduction in Key Stage 2 to ensure children know the accurate facts concerning this before going to secondary school, and to ensure children understand why the body changes in adolescence. We believe this work is an important part of safeguarding children, as knowledge empowers them, helping them to stay safe and cope with puberty understanding why their bodies will change.

### ***Why is this RSHE curriculum needed?***

There are four main aims for teaching RSE within the context of Primary School PSHE(Personal, Social, Health Education):

- More than ever before, children are exposed to representations of sex and sexuality through the social culture around them. The unregulated content on the internet or social media, can mean children may be exposed to dangerous, confusing or scary content. We can prepare them for this by presenting a balanced view of positive healthy relationships to help them to be discerning and to stay safe.
- There is much independent research showing most parents and carers value the support of schools in providing Relationship and Sex Education for their children. Parents and schools want children to be safe and happy.
- A range of independent research consistently shows that effective

Relationship Education delays first sexual experience and reduces risk-taking in young people.

- Surveys of children and young people, as well as Ofsted, have repeatedly said that Relationship and Sex Education tends to be “too little, too late and too biological”. This is one of the many reasons why the Department for Education has made Relationships and Health Education compulsory in primary schools with an emphasis on Relationships Education.

### ***If you have any questions...***

Talk to your child’s teacher or the head teacher. Often, when parents and carers find out what is in the curriculum, their fears are allayed as they can appreciate it is in the best interests of their child’s lifelong learning and safeguarding.

### ***What about LGBT+ issues?***

There has been much mis-information in the media about how LGBT+ issues are to be taught within the Relationships, Health and Sex Education curriculum in primary schools. We have produced a separate leaflet explaining its approach to this, please ask should you like to request one. We stand by our position that EVERY child is valued and special.

### ***What will my child actually be taught about puberty and human reproduction?***

Our ‘Changing Me’ unit is taught over a period of 6 weeks, usually in the second half of the summer term. Each year group will be taught appropriate to their age and developmental stage, building on the previous years’ learning. Please note: at no point will a child be taught something that is inappropriate; and if a question from a child arises and the teacher feels it would be inappropriate to answer, (for example, because of its mature or explicit nature), the child will be encouraged to ask his/her parents or carers at home. The question will not be answered to the child or class if it is outside the remit of that year group’s programme. The Changing Me unit is all about coping positively with change and includes:

**Ages 3-5** Growing up: how we have changed since we were babies.

**Ages 5-6** Boys’ and girls’ bodies; correct names for body parts.

**Ages 6-7** Boys’ and girls’ bodies; body parts and respecting privacy (which parts of the body are private and why this is).

**Ages 7-8** How babies grow and how boys’ and girls’ bodies change as they grow older. Introduction to puberty and menstruation.

**Ages 8-9** Internal and external reproductive body parts. Recap about puberty and menstruation. Conception explained in simple terms.

**Ages 9-10** Puberty for boys and girls in more detail including the social and emotional aspects of becoming an adolescent. Conception explained in simple biological terms.

**Ages 10-11** Puberty for boys and girls revisited. Understanding conception to the birth of a baby. Becoming a teenager.

All lessons are taught using correct terminology, child-friendly language and diagrams.

### ***How can I talk to my child about relationships, puberty and human reproduction?***

What children learn at school is only part of the curriculum, and children can continue to learn from you at home. For some parents/carers, it can feel totally natural to discuss relationships, puberty and human reproduction with their child, while for others it can seem uncomfortable. Either way, it is important to remember these key points:

- We all want children to be safe, healthy and happy.
- We need to consider their needs and the world they inhabit.
- We need to normalise talking about relationships, puberty and human reproduction to ensure children feel they can talk to parents/carers about any concerns or worries they may have.
- We may need to challenge our own ways of thinking about how we feel about relationships and sex education.
- We have choices. We can avoid talking about relationships and puberty or we can communicate openly and honestly with children.

### ***Here are some tips for talking to your child:***

- Be honest. If you don't know the answer to a question, be honest and say so. Tell your child that you will need to find out and that you will get back to them with more soon.
- Remember that children are curious and want to know and understand. We tend to place our adult perspective on children's questions and comments, when actually a child just wants (and needs) a very simple, age-appropriate, matter-of-fact answer. This answer will not involve an 'adult' understanding of

a topic – it needs to be at a child’s level, with opportunity given for the child to be able to ask further questions if needed. Give yourself time to respond by asking something like, “What do you think that means?” or “Why do you ask?”

- Keep lines of communication open. Having an open and honest relationship with your child can really help make conversations easier, so make sure that you are always willing to talk when your child needs you; if you can’t, explain why and find another time when it is more mutually convenient.
- Use correct terminology. It helps that children aren’t confused by hints, euphemisms and innuendo; use correct terminology whenever you can, especially for body parts. This is hugely important for safeguarding too.
- Respond to what children say they need. Bear in mind that children’s lives today are very different from even five years ago. Therefore, the education they receive needs to reflect this. Research shows us that children want and need to understand relationships, puberty and human reproduction, and want to be able to talk with parents/carers about this when they have had lessons at school. We may feel that they know too much, when actually ignorance is the enemy of innocence.
- Answer questions and don’t be afraid to say, ‘I really don’t know – let’s work it out or look it up together’. Have a phrase for awkward moments, such as, ‘That’s a good question, and let’s talk about it once we get home’.
- Always respond. If you don’t, they may think it is wrong to talk to you about relationships, puberty or human reproduction and as a result you may find your child clam up when you want to raise the subject, now or in the future.
- If it all feels too personal, try talking about people in books, films and favourite television programmes.
- Enjoy it. Laugh with each other!
- Work in partnership with the school.

**We hope you found this information helpful. If you would like to know more about PSHE, contact us through the school office.**