

THORPE HALL

SCHOOL

Relationships and Health Education policy – Lower School

1. Background

Thorpe Hall School (Lower School) aims to provide high quality and age-appropriate teaching of Relationship and Health education to help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. This teaching also contributes to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society.

Although these are important educational subjects in their own right, Thorpe Hall School believes that learning about relationships and health promotes well-being and can also improve academic attainment.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help children and young people develop knowledge and attributes to support their own, and others', well-being and attainment and help them to become successful, and happy adults, who make a meaningful contribution to society.

Sex Education is also addressed as part of the National Curriculum, Science, in Year 6.

2. Aims of the PSHE Relationships and Health Education

The aim of relationships education at our school is to help pupils develop self-respect, confidence and empathy. Pupils will learn about what makes healthy relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in a way that is age appropriate and sensitive to their circumstances. This will include online relationships, and how to seek help if they feel unsafe. Teaching will respect the diversity of families in our community.'

Relationships education is not about sexual relationships.

Children's learning about Relationships Education, is mutually supportive of, and contributes to learning about Health Education, which includes physical health and mental well-being. Physical health and mental well-being are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental well-being.

The aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental well-being is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and well-being, promote pupils' ability to regulate their emotions and to reduce stigma attached to mental health issues.

Children's learning in Relationships Education and Health Education will support the wider work of the school in helping to foster pupil well-being, develop resilience and character that we believe are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society.

Thorpe Hall School believes that health and well-being are fundamental building blocks in the provision of a successful education and worked towards and achieved '*Healthy Schools Status (Enhanced)*' via a programme run by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.

3. Statutory Requirements

Relationships education is compulsory in primary schools, so all pupils must take part in these lessons.

Aspects of sex education will not be covered unless safeguarding concerns determine otherwise. Parents will be informed in advance if that happens.

Health Education is also statutory and focuses on learning about the characteristics of good physical health and mental well-being and the relationship between good physical health and good mental well-being.

4. Delivery of Relationships Education

Relationships education will be inclusive for all pupils, sensitive to all family and faith backgrounds and pupils' own identities. It will be respectful of all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Across Key Stages 1 & 2, pupils will be supported to develop the following skills as appropriate to their age:

- Communication skills
- Forming positive relationships including self-respect as well as respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness and managing conflict and difficult emotions

These skills are taught within the context of family life and friendships, in an age appropriate way. The school environment will reflect, value and celebrate the diversity of friendships and relationships. Lessons will be delivered by school staff, usually form staff and sometimes the School Counsellor.

Children will sometimes ask questions pertaining to relationships, sex or sexuality that go beyond what is set out in the curriculum. If questions go unanswered by school staff, children may turn to inappropriate sources of information including the internet. We will answer any questions in a way that is sensitive to children's family and faith backgrounds, appropriate to their age and understanding, and consistent with the relationships education policy and scheme of work. This may necessitate discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups, as not every child in a class will have the same type of questions. We may contact parents if we need guidance about a child's needs or if we think a child would benefit from their parents' input around a particular issue.

The Department for Education (DfE) has set out guidance on what children must learn in Relationships Education by the end of Year 6, under a series of themes. The statutory content as written by the DfE is set out below. Some themes will recur throughout school while others will be taught in the most appropriate years.

4.1. Families and people who care for me

- Families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

4.2. Caring friendships

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- Characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- Healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- 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 from others, if needed.

4.3. Respectful relationships

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

4.4. Online relationships

- People sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- 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.
- Rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- How critically to 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.

4.5. Being safe

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- 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.
- 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.

Religious education links to relationships education by looking at family, values and morals, and the celebration of marriage in different traditions.

5. Delivery of Health education

The Department for Education (DfE) has set out guidance on what children must learn in Health Education by the end of Year 6, under a series of themes. The statutory content as written by the DfE is set out below. Some themes will recur throughout school while others will be taught in the most appropriate years.

5.1. Mental well-being

- Mental well-being 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, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation 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, voluntary and service-based activity on mental well-being and happiness.
- Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental well-being.
- Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental well-being or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

5.2. Internet safety and harms

- For most people, the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- The benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical well-being.
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and 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, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

5.3. Physical health and fitness

- 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, 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.

5.4. Healthy eating

- What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding 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, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

5.5. Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

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

5.6. Health and prevention

- 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, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
- The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.

5.7. Basic first aid

- 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.

5.8. Changing adolescent body

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

6. Parents' right to withdraw their children from lessons

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Sex Education is taught in Year 6 within the Science Curriculum and therefore Parents have no statutory right to withdraw their child from this subject.

7. References

- 1 Annual Report of Chief Medical Officer 2012 Our Children Deserve Better: Prevention Pays
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- 3 The link between pupil health and well-being and attainment Public Health England / National Association of Headteachers (2014) Ref 2014491 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-link-between-pupil-health-and-wellbeing-and-attainment>
- 4 Literature Review Evaluating the Impact of PSHE on Students’ Health, Well-being and Academic Attainment (2017) Pro Bono Economics <https://www.probonoeconomics.com/sites/default/files/files/PSHE%20Evidence%20Review%202017.PDF>
- 5 A curriculum for life: The case for statutory Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education (2017) The PSHE Association <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/system/files/Curriculum%20for%20life%20December%202017%2012.06%2019%20Dec.pdf>
- 6 Gutman L.M. and Vorhaus J. (2012) *The Impact of Pupil Behaviour and Well-being on Educational Outcomes* Institute of Education, University of London Research Report DfE RR-253 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/219638/DFE-RR253.pdf
- 7 Framework Guidance on Character Education from the Department for Education (2019) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/849654/Character_Education_Framework_Guidance.pdf

Policy created:	October 2020
Approved:	November 2020
Next Review:	October 2021