

# THORPE HALL SCHOOL

## Personal, Social, Health and Religious Education & Relationship and Sex Education (PSHRE) Policy

### 1. Policy context and rationale

Thorpe Hall School is a fully inclusive, co-educational, independent day school for children aged 2-16 in Southend, Essex. At the core of our success is a strong and focused pastoral and wellbeing programme where we nurture, support and develop confidence, social skills and friendships. One of the ways we develop these skills is through a robust and inclusive PSHRE Programme of study that creates an environment where students are free to question, discover and debate.

This policy covers our schools approach to PSHRE within the School curriculum. We have a stand-alone policy on Relationships and Sex Education which is available to view on the School website under [School Policies](#).

This policy was produced by the lead of PSHRE and RSE through consultation with the Senior Leadership team, Heads of Year, Safeguarding leads and feedback from parents and students. This will be assessed at Governors meetings.

At Thorpe Hall School, our PSHRE and RSE curriculum run simultaneously. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is a lifelong learning that covers relationships, emotions and the importance of looking after ourselves. It also covers different families, sex, sexuality and sexual health. We want all of our students to develop knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health, and relationships; empowering our pupils with the knowledge they need to protect themselves and others. We know our students will face many challenges throughout life and this RSE programme allows them to make informed choices when facing risks, challenges, and complex contexts. RSE has a key part to play in the personal, social, moral and spiritual development of young people and we want to build their resilience to know when to ask for help and where to source the correct help if needed.

It has always been crucial to foster a transparent, supportive and collaborative role between staff and students and in September 2021 we asked our pupils and staff about their current PSHRE/RSE provision (see annex A for details). Pupils have been involved in the creation of this policy through completing a survey outlining their needs, ensuring the issues they face are addressed.

### 2. Policy aims and objectives

Personal, Social, Health and Religious Education (PSHRE) is a non-statutory but important and necessary part of all pupils' education (Department for Education, 2020). This policy is informed by and fulfils the School's overarching core values of:

- Character;
- Expectations;
- Aspiration;
- Inclusivity and
- Community.

Taken together, these will ensure that we attain our ultimate mission to create opportunities for all learner so that they can dream with their eyes open, achieve their ambitions and positively impact the world.

These policy aims and objectives are in line with government legislation regarding RSE and other relevant government policies and regulations (See annex B for further details).

### **3. Policy Availability**

Our policies will be available to parents and carers through the School website. If any parent or carer would like access to a hard copy of this policy is required please contact the main reception.

### **4. Intended outcomes**

As a result of our PSHRE and RSE programme of learning, pupils will:

- Develop the skills of resilience, assertiveness, negotiation, employability, risk-management, communication, teamwork, leadership and decision making.
- Understand their rights regarding health and well-being, living in the wider world and relationships.
- Be able to make informed choices regarding their physical, mental, cultural, sexual, moral and social well-being.
- Learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from adolescence into adulthood, always aware of the need to stay healthy and keep safe.
- Understand they have a responsibility to protect themselves and those around them.
- Have access to a comprehensive, balanced and relevant body of factual information to inform their present and future choices.

### **5. Creating a safe and supportive learning environment**

At Thorpe Hall School we understand that content covered within PSHRE and RSE education works within pupils' real life experiences, therefore it is essential to establish a safe learning environment. We will create a safe and supportive learning environment by; setting ground rules at the start of every lesson (See annex C for further details) to create an environment for all to feel included in discussions; de-personalise discussions and establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate discussion points.

We will ensure that where pupils indicate they may be vulnerable and at risk, we will arrange for necessary support to be made available through our pastoral system. Staff routinely remind students of the protocols in place for confidentiality. If a disclosure is made, the teacher must act in accordance to the School Safeguarding Policies. This policy is informed by the School's Safeguarding policy and all staff will follow procedures laid out in these documents.

The School leads the programme but outside visitors have a role. There is a school protocol for involving outside visitors. We believe that external speakers can usefully supplement learning. We will ensure the external agencies and contributors' input is part of a planned programme which consolidates and grows prior learning. All visitors follow the Safeguarding policies in place when visiting the School. Classes or groups are always supervised by a member of the teaching staff.

### **6. Entitlement and equality of opportunity**

We recognise the right for all pupils to have access to PSHRE education learning which meets their needs. We promote the needs and interests of all pupils, irrespective of the race, sex, disability, sexual orientation or religion/belief through our school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. Teaching will take into account the age, ability, readiness, and cultural backgrounds of children [and those with English as a second language] to ensure that all our pupils can fully access PSHRE and RSE education provision.

We will use PSHE and RSE education as a way to address diversity issues and to ensure equality for all by offering a robust and inclusive curriculum. We recognise the right for all pupils to have access to PSHE and RSE education learning which meets their needs. We will ensure that pupils with SEND receive access to PSHE and RSE through carefully considered differentiation and adapted delivery where appropriate. We will not exclude access to PSHE and RSE for any pupil by ensuring that teacher and learning facilitators work with individual students where required and if appropriate. It is not the School's policy to withdraw pupils with special educational needs from PSHE and RSE education to catch up on other national curriculum subjects: these aspects of personal and social development are as important to all pupils as their academic achievement.

Full PSHE and RSE education provision will be accessible to every pupil, although parents have a right to withdraw their children from those parts of RSE not within the national curriculum science programmes of study. For further details, please refer to our RSE policy and the 'Right to withdraw' section.

## **7. Intended outcomes**

As a result of our PSHRE programme of learning, the students at Thorpe Hall School will be taught age appropriate content that will include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- keeping safe (including online)
- accessing help and support when needed and supporting friends
- be able to ask for and give or refuse consent
- dealing with pressure to initiate sex whether it comes from peers or potential sexual partners
- developing healthy, mutually enjoyable relationships at the point at which they feel it is right for them
- assessing and manage risk
- making positive choices and be resilient including when faced with challenging situations
- thinking critically
- identifying and manage feelings
- discussing sensitive issues respectfully

## **8. Learning and teaching**

A range of different groupings will be used to deliver PSHE including pairs, small groups and whole class discussions. In general most PSHRE education will be taught in mixed sex and gender groups.

## **9. Principles and methodology**

We will determine pupils' prior knowledge by conducting student surveys and baseline activities at the start of lessons to gauge differing levels of knowledge and understanding of issues explored. Active learning methods will include role playing, presentations and group discussion. We will ensure that sessions, including those on risky behaviour, remain positive in tone by educating students on

the potential consequences of lifestyle choices in a balanced manner, highlighting misconceptions about how often their peers take part in risky behaviours. Selected resources, such as books and film clips, will be used which support and promote understanding within a moral/values context and underpin the key messages of our RSE curriculum. These have been sourced from the PSHE association and other recognised providers. Learning about relationships and sex education in PSHRE education lessons will complement learning in other aspects of the wider school curriculum. We will help pupils make connections between their learning and 'real life' behaviours by encouraging critical reflection and debate in all lessons. In addition, throughout the curriculum links to religious education and ethics are evident. PSHRE and RSE links can be seen throughout our curriculum (**see annex D for further details.**)

Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHRE education provision and will cover; healthy relationships, safe sex, sexualised behaviour, managing puberty, sexuality, gender identity, CSE, pregnancy, abortion, contraception, impact of pornography and sexting.

## **10. Timetabling**

Our PSHRE and RSE education takes place as weekly 40 minute lessons for each year group in the Senior school and 30 minute session in the Prep School. Our PSHRE and RSE education is provided as a thematic approach, exploring the three core values of health and well-being, living in the wider world and relationships. Our PSHRE and RSE education provision is mapped and planned effectively to the standards laid out in line with the PSHE association thematic model. Our provision is further developed by planned enrichment assemblies and tutor times that take place throughout the year.

## **11. Monitoring arrangements**

Monitoring is an ongoing process that checks the degree to which our programme of study is being effectively implemented. This monitoring will answer question such as:

- Is the programme effectively managed and are staff clear about their roles and responsibilities?
- Does the planned programme reflect national guidance, local priorities and pupils' needs? • Are all pupils being taught the programme as planned?
- Is the quality of teaching consistent across all classes and does it exemplify best practice?

These questions can be answered through planning reviews, learning walks, stakeholder surveys, recording pupil attendance and drop down workshops, regular review of the PSHRE & RSE Policies, gathering information school reports and sampling the quality and content of children's work.

Pupils' development is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. Additionally, this is done through:

- Baseline testing at the start and end of each unit
- Assessment for Learning during lessons
- Lesson observations
- Parent, staff and student surveys

## **12. Assessment**

Assessment in our PSHRE and RSE education focuses on learning, set against the lesson objectives and outcomes. We will assess pupils' learning and progression through baseline assessments, assessment for learning activities throughout their sessions and endpoint assessments.

In addition, celebration of achievement contributes to building students' self-esteem, developing a sense of community and belonging, helps create a positive atmosphere in the School and develops

student's sense of pride. Students are rewarded using house points and through recognition of effort and progress both in and outside of lessons at end of term awards assemblies.

### **13. Teaching responsibility and staff training**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring PSHRE and RSE is taught consistently across the School and is approved by the governing board. It will be taught by classroom teachers. It will be supported by resources and schemes of learning mapped from the PSHRE and RSE thematic model, utilising resources accredited by the PSHE Association.

Teachers responsible for teaching PSHRE and RSE will receive training on sensitive topics and the School adopts an open door policy for the staff who teach this to discuss any concerns or worries with the DSL.

We will occasionally use external contributors in order to deliver sensitive/important content. For example, online safety, road safety, relationships education, firework and Halloween safety. When using external speakers to deliver aspects of our PSHE programme we will ensure that their input is part of the planned developmental programme and that all objectives and outcomes have been agreed in advance of the visit.

### **14. Confidentiality and handling disclosures**

Teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality; it is important for everyone's safety that teachers and pupils are clear about what can and cannot be kept confidential. 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 safeguarding procedures will be followed as outlined in the Schools safeguarding policy. This will include disclosures made to teaching staff as well as external visitors.

### **15. Responding to pupil's questions**

Pupils' questions will be answered by classroom teachers in an open and honest manner based on consideration of prior learning and readiness. When necessary, teachers will be free to ask a pupil to wait for an answer to give them time to consult with the School's leadership team if they feel this is appropriate, or if the question raises potential safeguarding concerns. We will allow pupils to raise anonymous questions or concerns through our [here4u@buzz.co.uk](mailto:here4u@buzz.co.uk) email which is monitored by staff within the School. If a safeguarding issue is raised by an anonymous question staff will link with the DSL to follow the safeguarding procedures. If an area of need is highlighted we can respond through assemblies and form time activities.

### **16. Involving parents and carers**

We are committed to working with parents and carers. We will offer support through resources related to the topics covered in the programme being made available. We will communicate with parents and carers via the School website, weekly newsletter and other external letters of relevance.

We will communicate to parents about their right to withdraw their children via the School website and correspondence sent home. If a parent wishes to withdraw their child alternative arrangements will be made. It is recommended that any parent wishing to withdraw their child from RSE will need

to put this in writing to the Headteacher, ensuring that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Parents are allowed to request to withdraw a child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive RSE rather than be withdrawn, the School should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

#### **17. Review date**

This PSHRE and RSE policy will be reviewed every 2 years to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the pupils, staff and parents, and that it is in line with current DfE advice and guidance. It will be reviewed by the Headteacher, governing body and designated safeguarding lead.

Policy Revised:	January 2022
Policy Approved:	January 2022
Next Review Date:	January 2024

## **Annex A: Survey of pupils, parents and staff indicated that:**

Key needs identified by pupils were that they wanted more discussions

Key needs identified by parents were to be made aware of the RSE policy and the content of lessons being taught.

Key needs identified by staff were content being given to them ahead of time in order to prepare and ask questions if necessary

## **Annex B: Government legislation and relevant policies.**

### **Legislation**

Thorpe Hall School are required to teach RSE as part of the Department of Education statutory guidance on relationships and sex education and this informs all of our curriculum plans. Current regulations and guidance from the Department of Education state RSE is compulsory from 1st September 2020.

### **Links to other school policies and areas of the curriculum**

This policy supports the following policies:

- Safeguarding
- Keeping children safe in education- Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- Behaviour
- Equality and diversity
- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Online safety

## **Annex C: Distancing techniques**

We will set the following ground rules at the start of every lesson:

1. Everybody has the right to feel listened to
2. Everybody has the right to join in and speak if they want to
3. We have the responsibility to ensure people do not feel judged or 'put down'
4. We have responsibility to use the correct vocabulary so as not to cause offence
5. Everybody has the responsibility to keep confidentiality
6. Everybody has the right to seek help or advice if they want to

## **Annex D: PSHE and RSE across the curriculum**

Within Thorpe Hall School we have many cross-curricular links with other subject areas that help to consolidate the subject areas and allow our pupils to see links with the wider world. PSHRE complements several subjects including Science, English, PE, RE and ICT. We look for opportunities to draw links between the subjects where appropriate. In addition, discrete PSHRE lessons are supported by extracurricular activities within Choice afternoons such as First Aid. Some other

examples where student voice promotes Equality, diversity and inclusivity, are:- The Pretty Tough group and The Diana Award to train Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in school.