**Green Meadow Independent Primary School**

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**Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy**

**Policy approved September 2024**

**Next review date for this policy August 2025**

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**Introduction**

At Green Meadow Independent Primary School, we have welcomed the new mandatory status of Relationships Education and Health Education for Primary Schools and agree with the Department for Education’s aim that;

“Through these subjects, we want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe – we want to equip them for adult life and to make a positive contribution to society.”

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. We have based our school’s relationship and sex education policy on the DfE guidance document Relationship and Sex Education Guidance (ref DfE 0116/2000) and the Brook, SEF and PSHE Association Supplementary Advice document ‘Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) for the 21st Century.

The Government guidance says that by the end of primary school, it is mandatory for pupils to have been taught content on:

* Families and people who care for me
* Caring friendships
* Respectful relationships
* Online relationships
* Being safe
* Mental wellbeing
* Internet safety and harms
* Physical health and fitness
* Healthy eating
* Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
* Health and prevention
* Basic first aid
* The changing adolescent bodies
* Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

**Aims of our Relationship Education programme**

At Green Meadow Independent Primary School, Relationship Education (RSE) is delivered through the school’s personal, social, health and citizenship education curriculum, alongside the Science curriculum and promotes the principle of Relationship Education being lifelong learning. While we use RSE to inform children, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions.

Its aim is to provide a stimulating and supportive learning environment in which pupils can develop their feelings of self-worth and confidence, especially in relationships to others. This will include developing the following skills: valuing themselves as unique individuals, keeping themselves and others healthy and safe, communication, decision making and assertiveness, knowing how and where to gain information and support and participating in society. The school believes that Relationship Education should be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.

We do not use RSE as a means of promoting or discouraging any form of sexual orientation or sexual activity. It is important to note that evidence shows that comprehensive RSE programmes are shown to delay sexual activity in later life.

Therefore, pupils and staff are encouraged to share and respect each other’s views and be aware of differing family structures with acceptance, though in the absence of any promotion of any particular ‘norm’. An atmosphere where questions and discussion take place without stigma or embarrassment is created throughout the school, and partnerships with parents and community agencies are commonplace.

**RSE Expectation by the end of Primary School**

***Families and People who Care for me***

* 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.

***Caring Friendships***

* 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 from others, if needed.

***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.
* 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.

***Online Relationships***

* 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***

* 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

**The Teaching of Relationship Education**

RSE is taught through PSHE.

From Early Years, pupils learn to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively whilst developing empathy and self-respect for others. Throughout the school community, children are encouraged to make choices in an absence of prejudice and develop an appreciation for the consequences of choices made. This strives to empower children with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures, both as the exploiter and exploited.

Although we follow the statements set out by the DFE, we also aim to create our bespoke Green Meadow curriculum to meet the ever-changing needs of our pupils.

**Methodology**

A variety of teaching strategies are applied to enrich RSE with creativity.  All sessions are based on firm, fair ground rules.

* Circle Time
* Drama
* Group discussion/ Paired work
* Online resources
* Worksheets
* Outside agencies and community links will be used to support the wider curriculum of PSHE
* Assemblies
* Newsround

**Inclusion**

Green Meadow Independent Primary School believe that all young people should receive Relationship Education and therefore offer provision appropriate to the needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice if necessary. We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different groups and understand that for some young people, it is not appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We also aim to deal sensitively with children’s issues and answer appropriate questions raised as young people need to feel that Relationship Education is relevant to them.

**Partnership with parents/carers**

Our school is committed to working with parents/carers, and with most of a pupil’s informal relationships education occurring within the family, the school believes that the Relationship Education programme will complement and build on this in co-operation with homes.

**Specific Issues**

Parental / Carer Child withdrawal procedures

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary or secondary as the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

There is no right to withdraw from sex education that is part of the science curriculum e.g. ‘external body parts’ and ‘the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty)

There is a right to withdraw from any additional sex education.

**Safeguarding Procedures**

If a teacher has any concerns about the welfare of a particular child, then that teacher will inform a Designated Officer.  Any information thus obtained will be regarded as strictly confidential and will be passed to staff on a need-to-know basis.

Parents or carers have a right to be informed of any issue which is causing their child concern.  We will always handle this kind of situation with care and consideration.

**Facilities for Menstruating Girls**

Sanitary products are available within the bathrooms.

When changing for P.E. girls will go into a single occupancy toilet cubical if they need to.

**Answering difficult questions**

Staff are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied.  However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias.

*Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion.*

Both formal and informal RSE arising from pupils’ questions are answered according to the *age and maturity* of the pupil(s) concerned.  Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later.  The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area.

Our school believes that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Gender Deciding (LGBT)**

At Green Meadow we ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. We comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

We ensure that all teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. We consider when it is appropriate to teach pupils about LGBT, we ensure that this content is fully integrated into the programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. All pupils will be taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum.

## **Physical health and mental wellbeing**

**RSE Expectation by the end of Primary School**

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| **Mental wellbeing** | Pupils should know* that mental wellbeing 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 wellbeing 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 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 wellbeing.
* where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom they should speak to in school if they are worried about their own or someone else’s mental wellbeing 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. |
| **Internet safety and harms** | Pupils should know* that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
* about 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 wellbeing.
* 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
 |
| **Physical health and fitness** | Pupils should know* 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.
 |
| **Healthy eating** | Pupils should know* what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other 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).
 |
| **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco** | Pupils should know* the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.
 |
| **Health and prevention** | Pupils should know* 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.
 |
| **Basic first aid** | Pupils should know:* 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.
 |
| **Changing adolescent body** | Pupils should know:* key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
* about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.
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In Year 6 pupils will have a specific puberty session. Parents will be sent a letter to let them know when this session will take place. This will also give parents the opportunity to inform school about what their child is/will be using so we can provide a bespoke lesson catering for pupils needs.

This session for female pupils will include discussions on:

* puberty and the female body
* this is what happens to girls
* the female reproductive system
* explanation of what are periods and why they start
* the menstrual cycle
* the ages between when the first period starts
* the symptoms will you have
* PMS - things you can try to help
* what happens during a period
* feminine protection: period pants, re-usable/ single use panty liners, pads and tampons.
* how to dispose of your feminine protection products appropriately
* how you will know when your period starts
* how important good personal hygiene is and the different products available

This session for male pupils will include discussions on:

* puberty and the male body
* this is what happens to boys
* the male reproductive system
* how important good personal hygiene is and the different products available
* becoming a teenager
* accepting change

**Annex A – Key Stage 3 (please note at present we do not offer Key Stage 3)**

At Green Meadow we are aware it is important that the starting point for health and wellbeing education should be a focus on enabling pupils to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves.

Within Key Stage 3, teaching builds on primary content and introduces new content to older pupils at appropriate points. This enable pupils to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and to understand why terms associated with mental and physical health difficulties should not be used derogatively.

This knowledge enables pupils to understand where normal variations in emotions and physical complaints end and health and wellbeing issues begin.

Teaching about the impact of puberty, which started in Key Stage 1 and 2, continue in Key Stage 3, so that pupils are able to understand the physical and emotional changes, which take place at this time and their impact on their wider health and wellbeing.

Emphasis continues to be given to steps pupils can take to protect and support their own health and wellbeing. Pupils learn that there is a relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing and that this can also influence their ability to learn. Teaching covers self-care, the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors. This is linked to information on the benefits of sufficient sleep, good nutrition and strategies for building resilience.

Pupils know the contribution that hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities can make to overall wellbeing. They are taught to understand that humans are social beings and that outward-facing activity, especially that with a service focus (for example, work, volunteering and participation in organisations such as the scouts or the girl guiding movements or the Duke of Edinburgh Award etc) are beneficial for wellbeing. This can also contribute to the development of the attributes for a happy and successful adult life.

Pupils are supported to recognise what makes them feel lonely. Self-focused or isolating lifestyle choices can lead to unhappiness and being disconnected from society for those who have greater need for companionship and relationships.

Pupils are taught about problems and challenges. This includes factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions, drugs, alcohol and information about effective interventions.

If appropriate we understand we may also choose to teach about issues such as eating disorders.

Teachers are aware of common ‘adverse childhood experiences’ (such as family breakdown, bereavement and exposure to domestic violence) and when and how these may be affecting any of their pupils and so may be influencing how they experience these subjects. The impact of time spent online, the positive aspects of online support and negotiating social media, including online forums and gaming, are included. Teachers understand that pupils who have experienced problems at home may depend more on schools for support.

Pupils are taught how to judge when they, or someone they know, needs support and where they can seek help if they have concerns. This includes details on which adults in school (e.g. pastoral lead), and externally can help. Green Meadow continues to develop knowledge on topics specified withing Key Stages 1 and 2 as required and in addition we are aware by the end of Key Stage 4 pupils should cover the following content (due to provision of Key Stage 3 only we would ensure what information covered is shared with Key Stage 4 provision):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Mental wellbeing | Pupils should know * how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
* that happiness is linked to being connected to others.
* how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
* common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).
* how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others’ mental health.
* the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.
 |
| Internet safety and harms | Pupils should know * the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
* how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.
 |
| Physical health and fitness | Pupils should know * the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
* the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health.
* about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.
 |
| Healthy eating | Pupils should know * how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.
 |
| Drugs, alcohol and tobacco | Pupils should know * the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.
* the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
* the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
* the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
* awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
* the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.
 |
| Health and prevention | Pupils should know * about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
* about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
* (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening. the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
* the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
 |
| Basic first aid | Pupils should know * basic treatment for common injuries.
* life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR
* the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.
 |
| Changing adolescent body | Pupils should know * key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
* the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.
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At Green Meadow we are aware that the national curriculum for citizenship at key stages 3 aims to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. In particular, citizenship education should foster pupils’ awareness and understanding of democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. Teaching equips pupils with the knowledge to explore political and social issues, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments. It also prepares pupils to take their place in society as responsible citizens, manage their money well and make sound financial decisions.

At key stages 1 and 2, the national curriculum for science 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.

At key stage 3 and 4, it includes teaching about reproduction in humans; for example, the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS.

We understand we retain the freedom to determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people, which is developed in consultation with parents and the school community. Green Meadow complies with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act. If appropriate this may also require a differentiated curriculum. We understand we have a specific duty to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.

Flexibility is important as it allows Green Meadow to respond to local public health and community issues, meet the needs of our community and adapt materials and programmes to meet the needs of our pupils (for example in teaching about gangs or high local prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections).