



Relationships Education Policy

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, children need the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their well-being, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy.

(Relationships Education guidance advice for Head Teachers, staff and governing bodies. 2019, DFE)

INTENT

Relationship Education is lifelong learning about physical, moral, mental and emotional development and well-being. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, demonstrating respect, love and care, for family life in all contexts, including online. Relationships Education also includes an understanding of how to remain safe, be healthy and how to manage children's academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

Parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters and school will complement and reinforce this role. In order to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, children at St Thomas' need the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their own wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy, i.e. believe in themselves. The children will develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. We want St Thomas' children to be resilient and develop a character that will enable them to be happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils' ability to believe that they can achieve goals both academically and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve their goals and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives. The St Thomas' IO learning behaviours and core values of aspiration, respect, responsibility, honesty, trust and forgiveness are central to much of this development and the curriculum on offer at our school.

Our Relationships Education curriculum, beginning in Early Years when the children join St Thomas' to when they leave us in Year 6, is designed to allow each pupil to:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships;
- develop skills to make and maintain positive relationships and friendships
- develop positive attitudes and values and respect differences in opinion
- be able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work;
- be able to protect themselves and know where to go for help and support;
- gain accurate knowledge and understanding about sexuality and relationships
- be prepared for puberty.

IMPLEMENTATION

Early Years Foundation Stage

Positive relationship building begins in the Early Years, and is a key aspect to the Prime Area of Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED). It is vital for children to lead healthy and happy lives; this is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning this are the important attachments that shape their social world. From entry, Early Years practitioners at St Thomas' nurture strong, warm and supportive relationships with children to enable them to learn how to better understand their own feelings and those of others.

As it is intrinsically linked across each area of learning, PSED at St Thomas' EYFS is based around a natural, holistic approach to development. It will also incorporate the revised 'Self-Regulation' and 'Managing Self' strands in the new Framework for academic year 2021-22.

In our St Thomas' EYFS, 'The Unique Child' is at the heart of all we do. Children are supported to manage their emotions, develop a positive sense of self and have confidence in their own abilities. Through a combination of adult led activities (including 'All About Me' Topic learning, quality first wave 'In the Moment' teaching and nurture based intervention programmes) and crucial child initiated daily interactions, they will have regular opportunities to:

- Develop a positive sense of themselves and others.
- Form positive relationships and develop respect for others.
- Develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings.
- Understand appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in groups.
- Have confidence and pride in their own abilities, making positive choices.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet etc.
- Understand the importance of healthy food choices.

These attributes will provide the secure foundation from which they can continue to develop their relationship skills as they transition through school, and beyond into adult life.

Key Stage One and Two

St Thomas' C of E Primary Academy are committed to meeting the requirements of the primary National Curriculum, which fosters and develops Relationship Education alongside our Curriculum Continuum. A progression map can be seen in Appendix A.

By the time our children leave St Thomas' C of E Primary Academy, they will have been taught about the following:

- Families and people who care for us, in its many different forms including families headed by grandparents, single parents, families with two dads, families with two moms, adoptive parents and foster parents
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships including online relationships
- Being safe in all aspects of life, virtual and physical.
- Mental well-being
- Physical health and fitness including puberty and the life cycle of humans

The children will learn about relationships and health, including puberty. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age and reproduction in some plants and animals including humans. These lessons are part of the compulsory education on offer at St Thomas' C of E Primary Academy and children cannot be withdrawn from these lessons. St Thomas' C of E Primary Academy will ensure that the children are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and drawing on the knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science, how a baby is conceived and born.

Online safety is vital in today's society with more children being exposed to social media and having frequent access to technology. Ensuring that we provide a curriculum which allows children to understand the importance of keeping safe online, is vital. This will include areas such as the importance of keeping passwords safe, the sharing of information to others and the use of online gaming platforms.

Relationships Education will form part of science, P.E., Computing, RE lessons as well as lessons designed to cover specific elements of the Relationships Education curriculum. Suitable texts will be made available within the school library and classrooms to support this curriculum and time will be made available to cover components which may occur through children's free time such as friendships and how to deal with loyalty, trust, tolerance, negotiation, cooperation, respect, kindness and communication.

In the teaching of Relationships education St Thomas' C of E Primary Academy will ensure that the needs of the pupils are appropriately met and comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010. All teaching will be dealt with sensitively and respectfully with age appropriate content and responses. Children's questions which go beyond Relationships Education, and fall under the category of Sex Education, will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately depending on the age and maturity of the child. Visitors will be welcomed into school to support the teaching of Relationships Education including the parish leaders, school nurse and the local police officers.

IMPACT

The standards of attainment across the school will meet or exceed those which are expected of our children nationally. We continuously assess the implementation and impact of our Relationships Education curriculum in order to achieve the highest outcomes possible across all year groups and ensure we provide the support that is necessary for all children to have a good understanding of the complexities of relationships and a secure knowledge and skills base to navigate their way through these, now and in the future. Through our Relationships Education curriculum, we believe we can enhance children's education and help them to become confident individuals who have positive body awareness, an in-depth knowledge of how to keep themselves safe and healthy and who will, through respect, tolerance and understanding, forge and maintain positive relationships with a diverse range of family and friendship groups.

Review Date July 2023

Appendix A – Relationships Education Curriculum Progression Map