



# Relationships Education Policy

**Last update September 2023**

## **School Policy Statement**

At Beckfoot Phoenix, we want everyone to 'Learning lots, Making memories, being brilliant ' beyond their potential so that all children are well prepared for life outside school.

We want children at our School to

- Be safe.
- Behave appropriately.
- Understand the nature of human relationships.
- Understand the importance of stable, caring friendships and relationships.
- Have the skills, knowledge and understanding to live safe, happy, and fulfilled lives.

As a special school, content and teaching will be tailored to meet the specific needs of our pupils who are all at different developmental stages. As a school, we will ensure that teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, and developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law. We also understand the importance of children learning that every body part has a name so that they have the language to communicate clearly about their bodies and keep themselves safe.

## **1. Aim**

**Relationships Education at Beckfoot Phoenix is not about sexual relationships.**

The focus of Relationships Education in our school is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to:

- Friendships,
- Family relationships,
- Relationships with other children and
- Relationships with adults.

Pupils will learn about what makes healthy relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in a way that is age appropriate and sensitive to their faith. This will include online relationships, and how to seek help if they feel

unsafe. Teaching will respect the diversity of families in our community.

The aim of Relationships Education at our school is to help pupils to develop:

- Self-understanding,
- Self-respect,
- Confidence, and
- Empathy.

## **2. Policy Development**

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents as required by the Department for Education. We are committed to on-going consultation with families and stakeholders throughout the development of our school's Relationships Education Program. This process involved the following steps:

- Review – pulling together all relevant information including national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – staff had the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to work with us on the policy, look at examples of resources, and make recommendations
- Pupil consultation – we spoke to pupils about the skills they would like to learn
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was ratified by the Local Schools Committee (LSC) and this was notified to the Trust Board

### **3. Statutory Requirements**

From 2020, Relationships education became compulsory in all primary schools, including special schools, so all pupils must take part in these lessons.

Sex education is not compulsory for primary schools. Pupils will learn about puberty from the school nurse or as part of PSHE lessons in years 4, 5, 6. Other aspects of sex education will not be covered unless safeguarding concerns determine otherwise. Parents will be informed in advance if that happens.

The content of our curriculum outlined from page 6 onwards does not include Sex education and so is compulsory for all children. If parents/carers have any questions about this curriculum, they should contact the head teacher – Rachel Stirland – to discuss.

### **4. Links to other policies and curriculum areas**

#### **4.1 Curriculum**

At Key Stage 2, the Science/Understanding the World curriculum includes teaching about changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty. This remains statutory.

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

Health education, which is statutory in state funded schools from September 2020, includes teaching on feelings as they relate to mental wellbeing, the importance of friends and family, the impact of bullying, and how children can seek help if they have worries. It also requires schools to teach about the emotional and physical changes that take place during puberty.

#### **4.2 Policies**

The content of relationships education is supported by our behaviour and anti-bullying policy, equality and diversity policy, and child protection and safeguarding policy.

### **5. 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 all Key Stages, pupils will be supported to develop the following skills as appropriate to their age and developmental level:

- Communication skills
- Forming positive relationships including self-respect as well as respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and assessing potential risks and empowering children to make informed decisions.
- Helping children to acquire and practice important life skills such as decision making, assertiveness, managing conflict and handling difficult emotions.

The school environment will reflect, value and celebrate the diversity of friendships and relationships. Lessons may be taught by school staff, school nurse or visiting speakers.

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.

### **How Relationships Education is taught**

- Some of the elements of Relationships Education are taught through everything we do as part of our School ethos, i.e.. Attitudes, values, diversity, personal and social skills.
- Relationships Education is taught within compulsory Science/Understanding the World lessons which all children access.
- It is also taught within the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum.

### **Relationships Education Curriculum**

The Department for Education (DfE) has set out guidance on what children must learn 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.

#### **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 or 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

#### **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

#### **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 belief
- 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

### 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 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)
- 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

At Beckfoot Phoenix, our curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that build progressively across 5 stages of development.

Stage	Type of learner	Base
1	Pre-intentional	Orange, Red
2	Intentional	Orange, Red, Yellow, Blue
3	Early symbolic	Orange, Red, Yellow, Blue, Purple
4	Semi-formal	Blue, Purple, Green
5	Formal	Blue, Green

Curriculum content at each stage that leads to the DfE’s ‘End of Year 6’ guidance is outlined below.

Stage	PSHE curriculum	Science/Understanding the World curriculum
1 – taught throughout the day and within self-care sessions/PSHE lessons.	Feeling safe. Acknowledges/recognises carers, family, familiar staff, familiar children. Responds different to unfamiliar people. Responds to calming strategies, e.g., singing, rocking etc. Showing happiness, sadness, pain, discomfort. Learning to calm self- Transitioning better from carer Increasingly accepting of care. Initiates interaction with others. Responds to praise. As well as introduction to stage 2 work.	Show recognition or awareness of different: People – voices/accent/familiar/unfamiliar. Animals – touch, sound, smell. Learn body part names – leg, arm, hand, head, foot etc. Use correct terms for private body parts, eg. penis, vagina Accepts support with bodily changes linked to puberty. As well as introduction to stage 2 work.
2 – taught throughout the day and within self-care	Revisit and build on stage 1. Safe and unsafe places. Communication, making choices, greets others. Playing alongside and with others. Behave well in class, school, and community.	Revisit and build on stage 1. Notice things happening around them and, in their environment, – people, emotions, events. Recognise or respond to other people and animals.

<p>sessions/PSHE lessons.</p>	<p>Feel safe enough to express emotions. Says 'no' or shows preference. Knows own family. Accept help. Relate things to self and others, eg. Whose coat is this? Accept that some people need to touch your body and it's okay because it's to help you stay safe, eg. Doctors. Accept praise. As well as introduction to stage 3 work.</p>	<p>Recognise same and different in themselves and others Recognises animals are different to people. Learn body part names – fingers, toes, neck, back, tummy etc. Use correct terms for body parts, eg. Penis, vagina Accepts support with and begins to recognise bodily changes linked to puberty. As well as introduction to stage 3 work.</p>
<p>3 – taught throughout the day and within self-care sessions/PSHE, circle time, topic lessons.</p>	<p>Revisit and build on stage 2. Communicates needs and asks for help. Safe and unsafe secrets. Safe and unsafe places. Waiting turns, resisting impulses. Emotions – happy, sad, angry/cross, tired. Rules, consistency, structures and routines. Developing independence Differences - skin colour, types of hair, gender, special needs and disabilities etc. Friendships Falling out and saying sorry. Appropriate behaviour Respect and value for others. Safe touching – you can choose who touches your body, and say no to unwanted touches or hugs Learning that it's okay to say 'No!' if they feel scared or don't want to do something. Understand that some people need to touch your body and it's okay because it's to help you stay safe, eg. Doctors. Understand that some things are okay and normal and it's just your body growing up, eg. Wet dreams, erections. Understand that as we grow up, things change and that's okay and normal, eg. Pubic hair. Develop understanding of 'own' and 'other's' space. Enjoying your body and the way it feels is an important part of being alive. Learn that some activities and places, eg. Going to the toilet is 'private'. Accept supervision when online. Enjoy receiving praise. As well as introduction to stage 4 work.</p>	<p>Revisit and build on stage 2. Talk about what they see, key features, similarities and differences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family – life story, family history</li> <li>• People/cultural diversity.</li> <li>• Plants –growth, change and decay.</li> <li>• Animals – care and life cycles.</li> </ul> <p>Know that children grow into adults and get bigger and older. Learn that some body parts are 'private', eg. when going to the toilet. Recognise some bodily changes linked to puberty and respond to support given to maintain dignity and privacy. Understand that every part of my body has a name. Name body parts introducing correct vocabulary – bottom, stomach, shoulder, wrist, penis, vagina, chest, breasts, and testicles. Link body part names to actions, eg. Penis is where your wee comes out. Know that it takes a man and a woman to make a baby and that babies grow in a woman's tummy. As well as introduction to stage 4 work.</p>
<p>4 – taught throughout the day and within self-care sessions/PSHE, circle time, topic lessons and relationship education lessons.</p>	<p>Revisit and build on stage 3. Develop appropriate ways of being assertive. Talk with others to resolve conflicts. Safe and unsafe secrets. Safe and unsafe places. Talk about their feelings using words like 'happy', 'sad', 'angry' or 'worried'. Begin to understand how others might be feeling. See themselves as a valuable individual. Build constructive and respectful relationships. Understand rules and right from wrong. Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others; Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers. Understand 'own' and 'other's' space.</p>	<p>Revisit and build on stage 3. Talk about members of their immediate family and community. Learn about different types of families. Learn about different types of friends. Name and describe people who are familiar to them. Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawings of animals and plants; Know that children grow into adults and begin to learn how boys and girls change. Know that there is a cycle of life - plants and animals die and that animals including humans have babies. Know that plants grow from seeds.</p>

	<p>'Tells' when pop ups/requests are made online.          Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.          Learn that some activities and places, eg. touching own body parts are to be in a private place, eg bedroom.          Safe touching – what is safe, what isn't? you can choose who touches your body, and say no to unwanted touches or hugs          Learning that it's okay to say 'No!' if they feel scared, or confused or don't want to do something.          Understand that to keep safe and well, there are some people, eg. Doctor who may need to touch and talk about your body          Understand that some things are okay and normal and it's just your body growing up, eg. Wet dreams, erections.          Understand that as we grow up, things change and that's okay and normal, eg. Pubic hair.          Enjoying your body and the way it feels is an important part of being alive. Touching and rubbing your genitals to feel good is called masturbation. This is a private kind of touching.          Know where and who to go to for help.          Understand when help is needed.          Recognises own and other's achievements.          How to say 'no'.          Able to communicate about their body.          As well as introduction to stage 5 work.</p>	<p>Recognise bodily changes linked to puberty – females: eggs released (periods start), hips widen; males: sperm produces (sometimes wet dreams), erections happen. Females have uterus.          Knows how to maintain dignity and privacy.          Public and Private body parts.          Know that the private parts of girls and boys are different and that as they grow up, they are able to create babies and become parents.          Conception: It takes a man and a woman to make a baby. To make a baby, you need a sperm (like a tiny seed) from a man and a tiny egg from a woman.          Sometimes babies enter families in different ways like adoption, foster care or grandparent care.          Name body parts including colloquial/slang terms and correct vocabulary, eg. Willy/penis, vagina/fanny, anus/bum          Learn about puberty as appropriate through factual explanations of physical changes eg.          Periods are when blood comes out of your vagina. The blood is the lining of your uterus; reinforcing that physical changes happen at different times eg, some children start getting pubic hair when they're around 11, but it can be earlier or later; using the right words when you're talking about body parts – for example, 'It's normal for your penis and testes to start getting bigger around now'.           As well as introduction to stage 5 work.</p>
<p>5 – taught throughout the day and within self-care sessions/PSHE, circle time, topic lessons and relationship education lessons.</p>	<p>Revisit and build on stage 4.          Safe and unsafe secrets.          Safe and unsafe places.          Families/relationships what makes them work?          Why are families/relationships/people different?          What is marriage?          Friendships: acceptable touch behaviours that will continue to be appropriate in adulthood.          Hygiene: importance of personal hygiene, and hygiene routines, washing hair, bodies and private parts.          Understanding consent and being able to say 'no'.          Puberty and emotions: social boundaries, emotions, feelings, public and private, mood swings, periods.          Keeping safe using the internet and online.          Where to go and what to do if something hurts.          Understanding the boundaries of public and private behaviour.          Learning that it's okay to say 'No!' if they feel scared, or confused, threatened, unsafe, tricked or don't want to do something.          Understand the importance of 'telling' when pop ups/requests are made online.          Shows understanding of 'own' and 'other's' space.</p>	<p>Revisit and build on stage 4.          Life cycles.          Body changes.          Public and Private body parts.          Name body parts using correct vocabulary – vagina, penis, testicles, nipples, breasts, anus including colloquial/slang terms and correct vocabulary, eg. willy/penis, vagina/ fanny, anus/bum          Menstruation, erections, masturbation as appropriate.          Puberty – Recognise and understand bodily changes linked to puberty and preparation for adulthood – females: periods are when the blood comes out from the uterus and eggs are released, hips widen; males: sperm produces (sometimes wet dreams), erections happen.          Conception: it takes a man and a woman to make a baby. Inside a woman's body are tiny eggs. Inside a man's body are tiny sperm. When a sperm combines with an egg, this is the beginning of a new baby. All boys and girls begin life this way. Babies grow in a woman's uterus and they come out through the woman's birth canal, called the vagina.</p>

	<p>Understand that it's important to look after your body and see doctors etc. who may need to touch and talk about your body</p> <p>Understand that some things are okay and normal and it's just your body growing up, eg. Wet dreams, erections.</p> <p>Understand that as we grow up, things change and that's okay and normal, eg. Breast/penis size.</p> <p>Feeling unsafe and what to do about it.</p> <p>Dangerous relationships: communication skills to ask for help, importance of telling.</p> <p>Able to communicate confidently about their body.</p>	<p>Understand that babies enter families in different ways like IVF, adoption, foster care or grandparent care.</p> <hr/> <p>IF CHILDREN WANT TO KNOW HOW THE EGG AND SPERM JOIN TOGETHER – WE WILL DISCUSS THIS WITH PARENTS BEFORE EXPLAINING THE FOLLOWING CONTENT TO CHILDREN: the sperm from a man and the egg from a woman join together when a man and a woman have sexual intercourse. This is when the man puts his penis inside the woman's vagina.</p> <p>Sexual intercourse is something that grown-ups do when they both want to, and it is not something that children should do or something that is safe for children.</p>
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## 6. Roles and responsibilities

### 6.1 The Trust Board

The Beckfoot Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that all schools have an agreed policy in place and holds the head teacher to account for its implementation.

### 6.2 The Local School Committee

The Local School Committee will approve the Relationships Education policy and will review the progress on its implementation with the headteacher.

### 6.3 The Head teacher

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that Relationships Education is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory sex education lessons, if applicable.

### 6.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that teaching is developmentally appropriate and is taught in a way that children can understand.
- Delivering Relationships Education in a sensitive way, taking account of pupils' family and faith backgrounds
- Modelling positive attitudes to Relationships Education, as with any other subject
- Monitoring children's learning in order to ensure they make progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Ensuring that that all aspects of Relationships Education is tailored to the needs of all children and teaching materials are chosen and developed to ensure that the content is accessible.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory sex education lessons, if applicable.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching Relationships education. Staff who have concerns about teaching this subject are encouraged to seek support.

## 6.5 Pupils

Pupils learn Relationships Education:

- In specific lessons PSHE or Science/Understanding the World lessons.
- As a whole class, or in small groups, or on an individual basis.
- In response to key questions/as issues arise/as behaviours are observed.
- Within a context of relationships, tolerance, respect and family life

## 7. Working with Parents/Carers

The school works in close partnership with parents and understands that the primary role in children's Relationships Education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective, we:

- Inform parents about the school's Relationships Education policy and practice
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the Relationships Education of their child
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for Relationships Education in the school
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from those aspects of **Sex** and Relationship education, not included in the Science/Understanding the World Curriculum.

### Parents' right to withdraw their children from lessons

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education lessons taught as part of the Relationships Education or PSHE curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the head teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's file so that parents' wishes are on record. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from Sex Education.

Primary schools, including primary special schools, are required to teach the elements of Sex Education contained in the Science/Understanding the World curriculum and there continues to be no right to withdraw from these lessons.

## 8. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of Relationships Education as part of their induction, and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The head teacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurse or health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching Relationships Education. The sessions delivered by outside visitors will be consistent with our policy on Relationships Education.

## 9. Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Teachers understand that, to some extent, confidentiality during Relationships Education lessons must be acknowledged so that young people feel that they are in a 'safe space' where they can ask questions. Lessons should reinforce that, if pupils have any personal concerns or wish to talk about any of the issues raised in the lesson, they should feel comfortable speaking to their class teacher or another member of the staff about this.

Where safeguarding issues are raised, school staff are aware of their responsibility to share the information and follow statutory procedures in accordance with the Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy to protect and keep pupils safe.

## 10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of Relationships Education is monitored by Sarah Lloyd through planning scrutiny, learning walks etc. Pupils' development in Relationships Education is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Sarah Lloyd, Head Teacher, annually. At every review, the policy will be scrutinized and ratified by the Local School Committee.