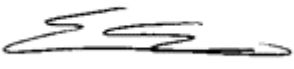




St. Helen's Catholic Primary School

LEARNING ABOUT ME POLICY

Policy Type	Required
Review Period	Biennial
Date of last review	Spring 2025
Next review	Spring 2027
Approved by Governing Body and signed by Elsa Corr, Chair of Governors	
Date	13 March 2025
Published on St Helen's Website	

POLICY FOR LEARNING ABOUT ME

MISSION

Our Mission

Respect yourself.

Respect everyone in our school community.

Respect everyone in our local community.

Respect everyone in our global community.

But most of all, respect God our Father in Heaven.

Aims of the policy

- To ensure that the dignity of the human person, enshrined in the declaration of the Catholic Church *Dignitas Infinita*, is central to school life at every level
- To provide guidance and information on our approach to pupils' personal development through the RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) and PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) curricula
- To ensure that staff, pupils and home settings have a full understanding of the school's approach to the RSE and PSHE curricula
- To ensure that our pupils develop into well-informed, responsible, caring and thoughtful beings who respect and value the feelings, opinions, beliefs and property of others.
- To support our pupils in developing a holistic understanding of themselves and how their bodies and minds work together towards strengthening their own health and wellbeing and as a result help them to establish healthy and meaningful relationships with others
- To help our pupils feel good about themselves and others
- To encourage our pupils to cooperate with one another and with adults
- To work alongside home settings to encourage our pupils to develop socially, personally, academically, morally and spiritually in preparation for a positive role in society

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies as the dignity of the human person forms the basis of the school culture. Everything we do starts with Learning About Me.

Rationale for the policy

The roots of the policy are two fold.

Firstly, it embeds the fundamental principles of *Dignitas Infinita* (2 April 2024):

"Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter. This principle, which is fully recognizable even by reason alone, underlies the primacy of the human person and the protection of human rights. In the light of Revelation, the Church resolutely reiterates and confirms the ontological dignity of the human person, created in the

image and likeness of God and redeemed in Jesus Christ. From this truth, the Church draws the reasons for her commitment to the weak and those less endowed with power, always insisting on “the primacy of the human person and the defense of his or her dignity beyond every circumstance.”

Secondly, it is rooted firmly in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Need (see Appendix I). We believe that a person will only be able to reach their potential if their needs are fully met and where they are not, this can lead to dysfunction and issues with emotional and mental well-being which then limit or prohibit achievement and the establishment of meaningful, healthy relationships.

Therefore, we place “Learning About Me” at the very centre of everything we do. We have a wholly person-centred approach to life at the school, where each and every individual has the right and freedom to learn about themselves and others at every level and at every opportunity. Our approach is fully integrated, using a variety of different strategies, teaching techniques and resources to ensure that our pupils receive the best possible provision with them at the very heart.

Respect and Safety

The concepts of respect and safety are central to life at St Helen’s. We strongly encourage the pupils to respect themselves and each other and to keep themselves and each other safe at all times. This underpins every aspect of the day, from how to socialise during lunchtimes and break times to how to walk around the site.

MY BODY

HOW IT WORKS.
MY PHYSICAL HEALTH

RESPECT AND SAFETY

MY MIND

MY EMOTIONS. MY BELIEFS. MY ACTIONS.
MY REACTIONS. MY ATTITUDES. MY VALUES.
MY OPINIONS.

RESPECT AND SAFETY

RESPECT AND SAFETY

LEARNING ABOUT ME

MY RELATIONSHIPS

MY FAMILY. MY FRIENDS. MY PEERS.
ADULTS. STRANGERS. COMMUNITIES.



The Core Values

The Core Values of St Helen's Catholic Primary School and the supporting framework underpins all aspects of life here. We believe that if pupils can live out the values they will grow and mature into responsible young people, confidently able to manage their thoughts and feelings and have a strong awareness of how their actions impact on others.

The Core Values are derived from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) and have been developed by the staff to support pupils' spiritual and personal development. The values have been chosen especially to reflect the school's mission statement which is founded on RESPECT.

Above all, the values are deeply rooted in the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching:

- **Dignity of the Human Person** – *God made each person, so every life is important and should be protected*
- **Family & Community** - *God made us to be part of communities, families and countries, so all people can share and help each other*
- **Rights & Responsibilities** - *God wants us to help make sure everyone is safe and healthy and can have a good life*
- **Option for the Poor & Vulnerable** - *God wants us to help people who are poor, who don't have enough food, a safe place to live, or a community*
- **Dignity of Work** - *Work is important in God's plan for adults and their families, so jobs and pay should be fair*
- **The Common Good** - *God made everyone, so we are all part of God's family wherever we live*
- **Stewardship** - *The world was made by God, so we take care of all creation*

All members of the school community, including staff, governors and families, are expected to be role models for the Core Values, which are described below. We recognise that the language contained within the framework is challenging. Staff will work with pupils on their understanding of the vocabulary and the concepts it underpins through PSHE lessons, assemblies and opportunities that arise for personal development. The framework will be adapted for younger pupils and those who may find the language inaccessible. The full framework can be found in Appendix 1 of our Rights & Responsibilities Policy.

Resilience

*Key Concepts - * Resourceful * Persistent * Adaptable **

When we are resilient, we understand there are different ways to solve a problem, we are independent in our choices and we seek to promote independence in others. We understand the importance of not giving up and we are unafraid to make mistakes. In fact, we accept that mistakes are a valuable part of learning and that it's important to try new things. We demonstrate a "can do" attitude when faced with a challenge.

Empathy

*Key Concepts - * Accepting * Understanding * Compassionate **

When we have empathy, we allow others to join in shared activities and discussions. We actively include and invite others to join in those activities and discussions and we encourage others to be inclusive and engage with others beyond their immediate friendship group. We are aware of different points of views and differences. We listen to, take an interest in and consider different points of view and understand how differences can impact a situation. We encourage and offer support to others facing challenges and we make choices, adjusting our approach to accommodate others' needs.

Service

*Key Concepts - * Courteous * Generous * Team-oriented **

When we act out of service to others, we are polite and well-mannered. We understand why courtesy is important at all levels. We are consistently polite without being prompted and we encourage others to have good manners. We understand how to share and we share happily without prompting. We show care for others by freely sharing time, resources, skills and talents. We go the extra mile when need arises. We are there for others and we play our part in a team, supporting and encouraging. We understand the importance of helping others and team work. We notice opportunities to lend a helping hand. We enjoy being part of a team and consistently look out for others, both within school and beyond.

Patience

*Key Concepts - * Fair * Calm * Slow to anger **

When we are patient, we are able to wait our turn. We understand that fairness looks different in different situations and we are able to help others negotiate outcomes appropriately. We demonstrate calmness for increasing periods throughout the day. We are able to regulate our own emotions in a range of situations and we can help others to do the same. We think before we react and are able to react appropriately. We are able to show that we can see a number of points of view and we encourage others to do the same.

Enjoyment

*Key Concepts - * Passionate * Curious * Participates freely **

When we enjoy ourselves, we demonstrate that we love what we are doing and we show enthusiasm both in and out of school. We are proud of our achievements. We have a cheerful outlook and share this with others, actively encouraging them to pursue their passion. We actively promote the activities we enjoy and encourage others to participate. We show enjoyment of learning new skills and ask questions to deepen our understanding. We strive to find out more by using a range of research methods. We actively share our new learning and are an inspiration to others. We demonstrate genuine commitment and are excited to get started. We pursue our hobbies and interests consistently over time. We are happy to lead groups and participate in activities at a more senior level.

Courage

*Key Concepts - * Embraces change * Independent * Self-reflective **

When we show courage, we are unafraid to try new things and we encourage others to take part in new experiences. We are keen to participate in unfamiliar situations and we suggest new ideas and ways of doing things, persuading others to come on the journey. We are willing to take a stand on our own principles, even in the face of resistance. We stand up for the school's core values in the face of adversity and we make and carry through decisions, even if they are unpopular, difficult or controversial. We are unafraid to take accountability when things go wrong. We are honest and take steps towards putting things right. We reflect freely on our actions, honestly and independently and we try to make amends without having to be asked.

Trustworthiness

*Key Concepts - * Reliable * Honest * Shows integrity **

When we are trustworthy, we can be relied upon to carry out a task without being prompted or reminded. We can identify a situation where others may need help and support and we readily step in. Other people turn to us for help and support. We can be relied upon to give a truthful account in a challenging situation and we understand the importance of honesty. We encourage others to be honest and truthful and own up if they

have made a mistake. We uphold spiritual and moral values and we are unafraid to hold others to account for the school's core values. We will always do the right thing, even when no one is looking and we consistently treat others as we would want to be treated ourselves.

Mind

Our pupils' emotional and mental well-being are at the forefront of everything we do. As outlined above, much of the development around this comes through the school's core values: Resilience – Empathy – Service – Patience – Enjoyment – Courage - Trustworthiness. Since they are themselves derived from Catholic social teaching, these underpin all aspects of life at the school, including attitudes to self-development and successful engagement in learning. Our belief is that if our children aspire to these values, they will grow up to be well balanced, well-adjusted individuals. The Core Values are therefore woven through the entire fabric of the school community.

Some aspects of development in this area are delivered through the human and social areas of experience. This would include tolerance of other faiths and understanding of other social issues such as racism, homophobia and gender equality, protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 (see also the school's [Diversity and Equality Policy available on the website](#)). Many opportunities to develop cultural awareness involve discussion and debate and this is often the forum for topical social issues to be discussed. Issues around social injustice may be delivered through opportunities to develop a persuasive argument or participate in a debate and the school events calendar also considers religious festivals and other multi-cultural events such as black history month. Home settings which originate in cultural backgrounds other than white British are warmly encouraged to share their cultural heritage and this may include, for example, celebrating the end of Ramadan or Hindu festivals.

The development of emotional regulation is driven through a programme called "Zones of Regulation" and again this is woven through all aspects of school life, including our Values Framework ([see Appendix II](#)). This is delivered through a range of approaches which may include whole class lessons, as a group or as individuals, depending on need. All provision for emotional regulation is highly tailored and delivered when appropriate either by the class teacher, a teaching assistant or a member of the inclusion team. Occasionally the Headteacher, members of the Senior Leadership Team or member of the senior management team may become involved with therapeutic internal restorative work for identified pupils.

Opportunities for learning about and understanding emotions, actions, reactions, stress responses and how to manage them are taken through planned discussions or specific lessons or, more significantly, when they arise. "Teachable moments" are central to our approach to our children's personal development as we feel that learning in this regard will be more meaningful at the appropriate time. "Teachable moments" reflect the key characteristics of effective learning and teaching. In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Therefore:

Children must have opportunities to:

- play, explore and discover themselves and the world around them;
- be fully immersed and enjoy achieving what they set out to do;
- have agency, that is, to have their own ideas, choose ways to do things and find new ways

Working in this way involves working with home settings too as we feel it is important for the whole community to understand our approach. Occasionally videos that may be helpful to home settings are broadcast on the school Facebook page.

A variety of programmes, strategies and resources are used as and when appropriate including but not limited to Thrive, comic strip conversations, social stories, SMART thinking, ABC thinking, PDMA (Personal Development through Martial Arts), moments of quiet reflection and some cognitive behavioural therapy techniques. The school uses the TenTen resources, which support learning in this way from a Catholic perspective and is also a member of the PSHE Association which provides a wealth of information and resources to support staff in their planning for these aspects of learning.

We have dedicated wellbeing practitioners, including a Senior Mental Health Lead and a Lead Thrive Practitioner, who, under the direction of the Senior Leadership Team, provide a range of programmes for pupils and their home settings, including but not limited to friendship groups, transition programmes and challenge management support for families. The school also engages the services of a counsellor from the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society.

We believe that for development in this area to be as effective and meaningful as possible teaching approaches need to be flexible, adaptable and timely and that messages must be consistent across everything we do. All members of the community, including home settings, members of the governing body and visitors, are expected to be good role models for the school values.

Body

Aspects of the curriculum involving how the human body works, for example, breathing, reproduction, healthy eating and the importance of physical activity are taught through scientific and physical experience.

This is largely knowledge-based and pupils are taught correct terminology for all body parts, internal and external. This includes the correct vocabulary for genitalia: we believe it is important for children to know how to describe their body correctly as this gives them confidence in owning and respecting their bodies and the bodies of others.

From a safeguarding perspective, it is vital that children are aware of appropriate, inappropriate and unsafe physical contact, their right to establish their own boundaries and their responsibility to respect the boundaries of others. The school approach takes into full consideration the guidance found in *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and college* (September 2021) which states, "An understanding for all pupils of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour and the right of everyone to equal treatment will help ensure that pupils treat each other well and go on to be respectful and kind adults."

These matters are addressed from the onset of a pupil's time at the school and ensures that they gain

confidence and self-assurance as they grow and mature. It also minimises embarrassment as they go through life and ensures that they are aware of how to discuss and identify potential medical issues as adults, for example, lumps or rashes which may appear on their bodies.

In terms of physical education, strong emphasis is placed on the benefits of physical activity for mental health and well-being. Children are actively encouraged to take part in fitness activities beyond the PE curriculum, for example, through the Daily Mile and a wide range of sports-based clubs. The school recently launched a #fitnessfriday initiative to further reinforce the impact on mental health and wellbeing and enrich the range of activities on offer throughout the school year. From time to time, families are encouraged to come and join in, for example with the Big Lent Walk which takes place on Fridays during Lent. The school participates in both the district and Catholic Sports competitions and a range of other tournaments, challenges and fun events within the Trust and across the city.

Relationships

Supporting our children to form healthy, meaningful relationships across a variety of contexts is a high priority for us as a school. Many of the strategies and approaches outlined in the previous paragraphs will support the pupils in developing respect, acceptance, empathy and boundaries in a range of situations which will ultimately enable them to strengthen their relationships in whichever area of their life they happen to be. We are confident that the skills they learn through our approach at St. Helen's will help them understand and tackle the many challenges that they will face in their relationships throughout their lives.

We are aware that in our ever-changing society, the structure of a home context will be different for each young person and that some pupils may, for example, reside in different households from week to week. We work closely with all our home settings to ensure that the relationship between the school and home context is strong and stable and facilitates open and honest discussion of the child's needs. We actively promote understanding and acceptance of different home contexts, of which there are many and varied within our school community and more still will almost certainly be encountered in the wider world. Safeguarding also forms an integral part of our work in this field and relationships between pupils and staff are strong and built on trust so that our young people know that they can report any concerns they have to any member of staff.

The school's Rights & Responsibilities policy and Anti-bullying policy give a detailed outline of what is expected of the pupils among their peers and within their friendship groups or individual friendships.

The school's Online Safety policy outlines the guidance given to home settings and children when engaging with activity on the internet. Regular sessions with the local police and fire brigade are provided for pupils to explore internet safety in more depth.

Aspects of sex education are taught throughout the school using a graduated, age-appropriate programme. This is driven largely through the science programme of study, for example, through life

cycles of plants and animals and the naming of external parts of the body.

Sex education is taught in line with the statutory programme of study (Appendix III). This is taught as a discrete unit of work and builds on previous understanding. (Appendix IV sets out the topics which are expected to be covered in each year group. These follow the “teachable moments” principle and coverage is tracked retrospectively and where gaps are identified, discrete units of work are planned). We are aware that, as they move into secondary education, our older pupils may encounter other young people who are already sexually active and that having the information they need to make informed decisions about what they are comfortable and uncomfortable with is essential in order to express themselves confidently and from an assertive perspective.

This confidence and self-respect will enable them as they mature to recognise and report anything with which they are unhappy but will also enable them to form meaningful, healthy relationships with clear boundaries as they become adults. It is equally important that they develop a clear awareness of how their actions can impact on others and in some cases be misinterpreted if intentions are unclear.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and evaluated on an annual basis.

Appendix I - Maslow's Hierarchy of Need



Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Appendix II – Values Framework

Value	Key Concept	Developing the Values	Embedding the Values	Living the Values
Resilience	• Resourceful	Is beginning to understand there are different ways to solve a problem	Demonstrates independence of choice	Promotes independence in others
	• Persistent	Is beginning to understand the importance of not giving up and to be unafraid of making mistakes	Accepts that mistakes are a valuable part of learning and that it's important to try new things	Demonstrates a "can do" attitude when faced with a challenge
	• Adaptable	Is prepared to be flexible and can adapt to changing situations	Shows flexibility and accepts change willingly	Demonstrates to others how a flexible attitude can lead to success
Empathy	• Accepting	Allows others to join in shared activities and discussions	Actively includes and invites others to join in shared activities and discussions	Encourages others to be inclusive and engages with people other than immediate friendship group
	• Understanding	Is aware of different points of view and differences	Listens to, takes an interest in and considers different points of view and how differences can impact a situation	Encourages and offers support to others facing challenges Makes choices and adjusts approach to accommodate others' needs
	• Compassionate	Gives others space when needed	Willingly offers a listening ear	Actively offers help to others and seeks help to support others
Service	• Courteous	Is always polite and demonstrates good manners	Demonstrates understanding of why courtesy is important at all levels	Is consistently polite without prompting and encourages others to demonstrate good manners
	• Generous	Is beginning to understand how to share and shares happily with prompting	Shows care for others by freely sharing time, resources, skills and talents	Goes the extra mile when need arises
	• Team-oriented	Is there for others and fulfils their role in a team, supporting and encouraging	Understands the importance of helping others and team work Notifies opportunities to lend a helping hand	Enjoys being part of a team and consistently looks out for others, both within school and beyond
Patience	• Fair	Is able to take turns	Understands that fairness looks different in different situations	Is able to help others negotiate outcomes appropriately
	• Calm	Demonstrates calmness for increasing periods of time throughout the day	Is able to regulate their own emotions in a range of situations	Always able to help others regulate their emotions in a range of situations
	• Slow to anger	Thinks before they read	Thinks and reads appropriately	Shows that they can see both sides of a situation and encourages others to do the same
Enjoyment	• Passionate	Demonstrates they love what they do Demonstrates enthusiasm in or out of school Is proud of their achievements	Has a cheerful outlook and shares this with others Actively encourages others to pursue their passion	Actively promotes this activity and encourages others to participate
	• Curious	Shows enjoyment of learning new skills Asks questions to deepen their understanding	Strives to find out more using a range of research methods	Actively shares new learning and is an inspiration to others
	• Participates freely	Demonstrates genuine commitment Is excited to get started	Continues pursuing their hobby or interest consistently	Is happy to lead groups and participates at a wider or more senior level
Courage	• Embraces change	Unafraid to try something new and encourages others to take part in new experiences	Is keen to try new things and encourages others to participate cheerfully	Suggests new ideas or ways of doing something and persuades others to take part
	• Independent	Willing to take a stand and act on own principles even in the face of resistance	Stands up for the school's values, even in the face of adversity	Makes and carries through decisions even if they are unpopular, difficult or controversial
	• Self-Reflective	Unafraid to take accountability when things go wrong	Is honest, takes accountability when things go wrong and takes positive steps to make improvements	Reflects freely on their actions, honestly and independently and tries to make amends without prompting
Trustworthiness	• Reliable	Can be relied upon to carry out a task without being reminded or prompted	Readily identifies situations where help and support are needed and steps in	Is someone that others choose to go to for help or support
	• Honest	Can be relied upon to give an truthful account in a challenging situation	Understands the importance of being honest and truthful	Encourages others to be honest and truthful
	• Shows integrity	Upholds moral and spiritual values	Unafraid to hold others to account for the core values	Will always do the right thing, even when no one is looking Consistently treats others how they would want to be treated

Appendix III – Primary Programme of Study for RSE

54. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

55. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils should be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.

56. Respect for others should be taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

57. From the beginning, teachers should talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts should enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

58. The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers should address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers should include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

59. Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.

60. A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as 'virtues') in the individual. In a school wide context which encourages the development and practice of resilience and other attributes, this includes character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Alongside understanding the

importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils should develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

61. Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.

62. Through Relationships Education (and RSE), schools should teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In primary schools, this can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know

- 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

Pupils should know

- 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

Pupils should know

- 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

Pupils should know

- 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

Pupils should know

- 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.

Managing difficult questions

63. Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education. The school's policy should cover how the school handles such questions. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.

64. Meeting these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of Relationships Education. Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods should take account of these differences (including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Schools should consider what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting, as teachers may require support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class.

Sex Education (Primary)

65. The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools and the content set out in this guidance therefore focuses on Relationships Education.

66. The content set out in this guidance covers everything that primary schools should teach 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 (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement.

67. It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born. As well as consulting parents more generally about the school's overall policy,

primary schools should consult parents before the final year of primary school about the detailed content of what will be taught. This process should include offering parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school. Meeting these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of sex education. Teaching needs to take account of the developmental differences of children.

68. Where a maintained primary school chooses to teach aspects of sex education (which go beyond the national curriculum for science), the school must set this out in their policy and all schools should consult with parents on what is to be covered. Primary schools that choose to teach sex education must allow parents a right to withdraw their children. Unlike sex education in RSE at secondary, in primary schools, head teachers must comply with a parent's wish to withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science. Schools will want to draw on the good practice for conversations with parents around the right to withdraw as set out in paragraphs 45 and 46 (below). Schools must also ensure that their teaching and materials are appropriate having regard to the age and religious backgrounds of their pupils. Schools will also want to recognise the significance of other factors, such as any special educational needs or disabilities of their pupils.

Right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)

45. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request it would be good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Schools will want to document this process to ensure a record is kept.

46. Good practice is also likely to include the head teacher discussing with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead).

47. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

48. This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision. The approach outlined above should be reflected in the school's policy on RSE.

49. Headteachers will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum.

50. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives

appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Physical health and mental wellbeing

83. The aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. It should enable them to recognise what is normal and what is an issue in themselves and others and, when issues arise, know how to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources.

84. Physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa.

85. It is important for schools to promote pupils' self-control and ability to self-regulate, and strategies for doing so. This will enable them to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges. This integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing has a potential positive impact on behaviour and attainment.

86. Effective teaching should aim to reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular those to do with mental wellbeing. Schools should engender an atmosphere that encourages openness. This will mean that pupils feel they can check their understanding and seek any necessary help and advice as they gain knowledge about how to promote good health and wellbeing.

87. Schools have flexibility to design and plan age-appropriate subject content, but this guidance sets out core areas for health and wellbeing that are appropriate for primary ... aged pupils

88. Puberty including menstruation should be covered in Health Education and should, as far as possible, be addressed before onset. This should ensure male and female pupils are prepared for changes they and their peers will experience.

Menstruation

89. The onset of menstruation can be confusing or even alarming for girls if they are not prepared. Pupils should be taught key facts about the menstrual cycle including what is an average period, range of menstrual products and the implications for emotional and physical health. In addition to curriculum content, schools should also make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation including with requests for menstrual products. Schools will need to consider the needs of their cohort of pupils in designing this content.

Physical health and mental wellbeing: Primary

90. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Teachers should be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.

91. This starts with pupils being taught about the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and giving pupils the language and knowledge to understand the normal range of emotions that everyone experiences. This should enable pupils to articulate how they are feeling, develop the language to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate for the situations that they experience.

92. Teachers should go on to talk about the steps pupils can take to protect and support their own and others' health and wellbeing, including simple self-care techniques, personal hygiene, prevention of health and wellbeing problems and basic first aid.

93. Emphasis should be given to the positive two-way relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing, and the benefits to mental wellbeing of physical exercise and time spent outdoors.

94. Pupils should also be taught the benefits of hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities. This teaching should make clear that people are social beings and that spending time with others, taking opportunities to consider the needs of others and practising service to others, including in organised and structured activities and groups (for example the scouts or girl guide movements), are beneficial for health and wellbeing.

95. Pupils should be taught about the benefits of rationing time spent online and the risks of excessive use of electronic devices. In later primary school, pupils should be taught why social media, computer games and online gaming have age restrictions and should be equipped to manage common difficulties encountered online.

96. A firm foundation in the benefits and characteristics of good health and wellbeing will enable teachers to talk about isolation, loneliness, unhappiness, bullying and the negative impact of poor health and wellbeing.

By the end of primary school:

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 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 wellbeing.
- 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 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 & 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 & 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 & 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.

Appendix IV – Learning About Me Topic Overview

Autumn I	Autumn II	Spring I	Spring II	Summer I	Summer II
Personal Safety & British Values	Bullying & British Values	Online Safety & British Values	Managing Relationships	Community, responsibility & British Values	Transitions
• Risk management • Making safe choices • Healthy eating • Personal hygiene • Physical activity • Personal wellbeing • Democracy	• Resisting peer influence • Anti-bullying week • Rule of Law • UK Parliament week • Gangs	• Online presence and reputation • Online choices & influences • Digital & media literacy • Critical thinking • Freedom of speech • Individual liberty	• Conflict resolution • Challenges in friendships • Relationship boundaries • Respect & healthy relationships • Expectations • Consent: unwanted or unwelcome treatment and how to respond	• Rights in the community • Diversity, equality & discrimination • Prejudice • Extremism • Mutual respect and tolerance of different faith & beliefs	• Moving on • Change Management • Developing resilience