Thorntree Academy

PERSONAL, SOCIAL and HEALTH EDUCATION & SEX & RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

School Name:	**Thorntree Academy**
Date Policy approved	**Autumn 1 2025**
Review date	**September 2026**
Linked Policies	**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** **Behaviour Policy** **Anti-bullying Policy**

Introduction

We have based our school's relationship and sex education policy on the DfE guidance document Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (ref DfE 0116/2021) and the supplementary guidance developed by the PSHE Association (Supplementary Advice document 'Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) for the 21st Century) and their partners Brook and the Sex Education Forum.

All schools must provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, a PSHE curriculum must:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.
- Prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The Government's PSHE education review of PSHE Education (March 2013) stated that the subject would remain non-statutory and that no new programmes of study would be published. The DfE specified as part of its National Curriculum guidance that 'All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice'. The review also detailed:
"PSHE remains an important and necessary part of all pupils' education. We believe that all schools should teach PSHE, drawing on good practice, and have outlined this expectation in the introduction to the new National Curriculum" (Written Ministerial Statement: Review of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, March 2013).

In these documents, sex education is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development'. Thorntree Academy believes; it is about understanding the importance of positive relationships for family life, it is about stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about exploring and understanding about, sexuality, fertility, keeping safe and healthy.

Life Lessons: PSHE and Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in Schools report, from the House of Commons Education Committee recommends that SREE be "renamed" Sex and Relationships Education, throughout this document we therefore use the term Sex and Relationship Education or acronym (SRE) to refer to the topic of the traditionally referred topic of Sex and Relationship Education, this places more emphasis on relationships.

The secretary of state for Education announced via the Children and Social Work Bill, 2017 that relationship education would be made statutory for all Primary school age children by September 2019, the consideration was also made that Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) be also made statutory. The school policy is a way to reflect these proposals and aims for forward planning ready for these statutory changes to be embedded. The policy will be updated in light of new developments and/or guidance in this area.

While we use SRE to inform children about sex and reproduction issues, 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. We do not use SRE 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 SRE programmes are shown to delay sexual activity in later life. There is also a link between school SRE programmes and reductions in Teenage Conceptions (NATSAL, 2013)

The teaching of SRE at Thorntree Academy, uses an integrated and consistent approach, is an important aspect of pupils' education. SRE includes supporting young people in developing self-confidence in preparing for physical and emotional changes into adulthood. Thorntree Academy believes that the teaching of SRE should be shared with parents and be mutually supportive and complementary. It aims to promote an understanding of the range of family types and other people who contribute to providing children with the care, love and support they need to grow and develop.

This policy has been developed to ensure that staff and parents/carers are clear about the statutory requirements regarding SRE and the proposed changes by the UK government to ensure our children are ready for their transition to adulthood. As a school we are committed to our pupils receiving their educational entitlement.

Through the implementation of this policy, the school will meet specific aspects of the legal and statutory requirements.

As part of the Children and Social Work Bill 2017, every child will be legally entitled to receive statutory SRE. It is our intention that all children have the opportunity to experience a programme of SRE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development with differentiated provision if required. Parents/carers will still hold the legal right to withdraw children or opt out of specific lessons should they wish to. Any concerns can be addressed by contacting the school, further details on this can be found in the 'Specific Issues' section, page 13, of this document.

What is SRE?

<u>Definition of Relationships and Sex Education</u>
'SRE is lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings' (Sex Education Forum, 1999).

Effective SRE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by children if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables children and young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

SRE makes an important contribution to health and well-being by supporting children and young people's ability to learn, achieve and flourish.

"The right to education includes the right to sexual education, which is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realising other human rights, such as the right to health, the right to information and sexual and reproductive rights."
Report to the UN General Assembly - July 2010 | Item 69, paragraph 18

SRE consists of three main elements

Attitudes and Values

- learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children;
- learning the value of respect, love and care;
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

Personal and social skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- developing self-respect and empathy for others;
- learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- managing conflict; and
- learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

K**nowledge and understanding**

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Why SRE is Important?

Research shows that SRE programmes helps create safe school communities in which children can grow, learn and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life (SREE for 21st Century Guidance).

Effective SRE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by children if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables children and young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

The PSHE Association (2017) states: 'A comprehensive programme of SRE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.'

Ofsted inspections have found that a lack of SRE in schools leaves pupils vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Research also shows that schools who are outstanding usually have high quality SRE and PSHE programmes (*Ref: Ofsted, 'Not yet good enough' 2013*)

The growing trend of digital access, in particular social media, have provided young people with means to engage in relationships, sometimes with people who they have never met, accessing environments such as in game lobbies or social media applications. It is vitally important that children understand that these relationships may present risks.

Overall Aim

The aim of this policy is to prepare children to cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up, and to give them an elementary understanding of what constitutes as a healthy relationship and human reproduction.

We aim to provide a framework for effective Relationships Education within the school environment.

Our Relationships Education programme reflects the aims and values of our school ethos and that of the Governing Body.

SRE will be firmly rooted in the programme of study for PSHCE Education and aim to:

- provide a secure, sensitive and caring programme of study where learning and well informed discussions can take place.
- provide information which is easy to understand, relevant and appropriate for the needs, age and maturity of the children.

- help and support children through their physical, social, emotional and moral development, giving them the confidence to talk, listen and explore feelings and relationships.
- encourage the use of correct vocabulary for body parts, so that children are able to name parts of the body and describe how their body changes.
- foster self-worth and awareness of how to protect youSRElf, stay safe and be healthy;
- help the children to acquire and practice important life skills such as critical thinking, decision making, communication and assertiveness to help them make well informed decisions and live confident, healthy and independent lives.
- provide children with the ability to protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed.
- ensure that SRE is available to all children regardless of gender, ability, cultural or religious background in line with the school's policy on equal opportunities.
- prepare children for healthy relationships, including acceptable touch. What to do and where to go when something goes wrong and growing and, changing in their transition to adulthood.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors
As part of their general responsibilities for the management of the school, the Governors play a key role in the development of the school's Relationship and Sex Education Policy. They will continue their involvement through regular evaluation the policy. Our lead governor for the curriculum is Mrs Cat Barnett, Chair of the Governing Body and our lead governor for Safeguarding is Mr Allison Potter.

Head Teacher
The Head Teacher, Paul Watson, takes overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation and for liaising with the Governing Body, parents, the Local Authority and other appropriate agencies.

PSHCE and SRE Lead
The lead for PSHCE and SRE is Miss Jayne French. Along with the Head Teacher she has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to Sex and Relationships Education and the provision of in-service training.
Parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about Relationships and Sex, by:

- Maintaining the culture and ethos of the family and healthy relationships.
- Helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up.
- Preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

Parents/Carers
Parents/carers need to know that the school's SRE programme will compliment and support their role as parents/carers and that they can be actively involved in the determination of the school's policy. Parents/carers will be encouraged to support the school's SRE programme and access this policy. The PSHCE and SRE lead will also make available the materials used in the lessons to parents/carers. It is their statutory right to look at the resources used to deliver the curriculum.

All Staff
In Thorntree Academy Relationships and Sex Education is a whole school ethos. All staff have been included in the development of this policy and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them, including how sessions are to be developed and delivered.

The school recognises that some staff will hold very strong views, attitudes and values regarding teaching of this topic, therefore, Thorntree Academy will ensure that teachers will be comfortable with delivery of the topics.

External agencies / Health Professionals / Visitors
External agencies and visitors are used to enrich and broaden the curriculum where necessary. All visitors should be aware of the policy and work within it. The school does not endoSRE "drop down days" as a means to deliver this subject.

Multiculturalism

We are privileged to be part of a multiracial community which enriches our curriculum by sharing the experiences of other countries, cultures and lifestyles.
We believe in the importance of developing the children's social skills so that they grow into responsible and caring adults who are tolerant of the opinions and beliefs of others. Bilingual children and monolingual children whose first language is not English are given additional support by EAL staff using resources appropriate to their needs.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Support for children who have SEND is augmented by the PSHCE and SEN co-ordinator who, in conjunction with class teachers, provides individual education programmes and resources where and when appropriate.

Programme of Study addressed through PSHCE schemes of work

Aim of the scheme of work
To provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and skills they need in order to reach their potential as individuals and within the community.

Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contributing fully to the life of their school and communities. In doing so they learn to recognise their own worth, work well with others and become increasingly responsible for their own learning. They reflect on their experiences and understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up.

They learn to understand and respect our common humanity; diversity and differences so that they can go on to form the effective, fulfilling relationships that are an essential part of life and learning.

Objectives/Pupil learning intentions:

PSHE will support the development of the skills, attitudes, values and behaviour, which enable children to:

- have a sense of purpose
- value self and others
- form relationships
- make and act on informed decisions
- communicate effectively
- work with others
- respond to challenge
- be an active partner in their own learning
- be active citizens within the local community
- explore issues related to living in a democratic society
- become healthy and fulfilled individuals

Jigsaw Content

Jigsaw covers all areas of PSHE for the primary phase, as the table below shows:

Term	Puzzle name	Content
Autumn 1:	Being Me in My World	Includes understanding my place in the class, school and global community as well as devising Learning Charters
Autumn 2:	Celebrating Difference	Includes anti-bullying (cyber and homophobic bullying included) and diversity work
Spring 1:	Dreams and Goals	Includes goal-setting, aspirations, working together to design and organise fund-raising events
Spring 2:	Healthy Me	Includes drugs and alcohol education, self-esteem and confidence as well as healthy lifestyle choices
Summer 1:	Relationships	Includes understanding friendship, family and other relationships, conflict resolution and communication skills
Summer 2:	Changing Me	Includes Sex and Relationship Education in the context of looking at change

Drug and Alcohol Education

Definition of 'Drugs':
This policy uses the definition that a drug is: 'A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave' (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime).
The term 'drugs' includes:

- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines
- All legal drugs including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances which can be inhaled
- All illegal drugs

Effective Drug and Alcohol Education can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils as they grow up. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

Moral and Values Framework

The Drug and Alcohol Education programme at our school reflects the school ethos and demonstrates and encourages the following values. For example: Respect for self, Respect for others, Responsibility for their own actions, Responsibility for their family, friends, schools and wider community

Drug and Alcohol Education Content

The grid below shows specific Drug and Alcohol Education learning intentions for each year group in the 'Healthy Me' Puzzle.

Year Group	*Piece Number and Name*	*Learning Intentions 'Pupils will be able to...'*
2	Piece 3 Medicine Safety	understand how medicines work in my body and how important it is to use them safely feel positive about caring for my body and keeping it healthy
3	Piece 3 What Do I Know About Drugs?	tell you my knowledge and attitude towards drugs identify how I feel towards drugs
4	Piece 3 Smoking	understand the facts about smoking and its effects on health, and also some of the reasons some people start to smoke can relate to feelings of shame and guilt and know how to act assertively to resist pressure from myself and others
	Piece 4 Alcohol	understand the facts about alcohol and its effects on health, particularly the liver, and also some of the reasons some people drink alcohol can relate to feelings of shame and guilt and know how to act assertively to resist pressure from myself and others
5	Piece 1 Smoking	know the health risks of smoking and can tell you how tobacco affects the lungs, liver and heart

SRE Content

Foundation Stage - Early Learning Goals

- Families
- Relationships
- Friendships
- Naming of body parts

Years 1 – 6

The grid below shows specific SRE learning intentions for each year group in the 'Changing Me' Puzzle.

Year Group	*Piece Number and Name*	*Learning Intentions 'Pupils will be able to…'*
1	Piece 4 Boys' and Girls' Bodies	identify the parts of the body that make boys different to girls and use the correct names for these: penis, testicles, vagina respect my body and understand which parts are private
2	Piece 4 Boys' and Girls' Bodies	recognise the physical differences between boys and girls, use the correct names for parts of the body (penis, testicles, vagina) and appreciate that some parts of my body are private tell you what I like/don't like about being a boy/girl
3	Piece 1 How Babies Grow	understand that in animals and humans lots of changes happen between conception and growing up, and that usually it is the female who has the baby express how I feel when I see babies or baby animals
	Piece 2 Babies	understand how babies grow and develop in the mother's uterus and understand what a baby needs to live and grow express how I might feel if I had a new baby in my family
	Piece 3 Outside Body Changes	understand that boys' and girls' bodies need to change so that when they grow up their bodies can make babies identify how boys' and girls' bodies change on the outside during this growing up process recognise how I feel about these changes happening to me and know how to cope with those feelings

4	Piece 2 Having A Baby	correctly label the internal and external parts of male and female bodies that are necessary for making a baby understand that having a baby is a personal choice and express how I feel about having children when I am an adult
	Piece 3 Girls and Puberty	describe how a girl's body changes in order for her to be able to have babies when she is an adult, and that menstruation (having periods) is a natural part of this know that I have strategies to help me cope with the physical and emotional changes I will experience during puberty

5	Piece 2 Puberty for Girls	explain how a girl's body changes during puberty and understand the importance of looking after myself physically and emotionally understand that puberty is a natural process that happens to everybody and that it will be OK for me
	Piece 3 Puberty for Boys and Girls	describe how boys' and girls' bodies change during puberty express how I feel about the changes that will happen to me during puberty
	Piece 4 Conception	understand that sexual intercourse can lead to conception and that is how babies are usually made understand that sometimes people need IVF to help them have a baby appreciate how amazing it is that human bodies can reproduce in these ways

6	Piece 2 Puberty	explain how girls' and boys' bodies change during puberty and understand the importance of looking after myself physically and emotionally express how I feel about the changes that will happen to me during puberty
	Piece 3 Girl Talk/Boy Talk	ask the questions I need answered about changes during puberty reflect on how I feel about asking the questions and about the answers I receive
	Piece 4 Babies – Conception to Birth	describe how a baby develops from conception through the nine months of pregnancy, and how it is born recognise how I feel when I reflect on the development and birth of a baby
	Piece 5 Attraction	understand how being physically attracted to someone changes the nature of the relationship express how I feel about the growing independence of becoming a teenager and am confident that I can cope with this

Specific Issues

Parental / Child withdrawal procedures

The government guidance on SRE (DfE 2000) emphasises the importance of schools working in partnership with parents and carers. Under current legislation schools should enable parents/carers to exercise their right to withdraw their children (until the age of 19) from any school SRE taught outside National Curriculum Science (Education Act 1996).
Parents/carers have a legal right to see the school SRE policy and to be given a copy of it (Education Act 1996). Parents should also be aware that schools are legally required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Relationships and sex education topics can arise incidentally in other subjects and it is not possible to withdraw pupils from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions

Parents may withdraw their children from any or all parts of the school's programme of SRE up to the age of 19 years old. Parents do not have to give reasons for their decisions, nor do they have to indicate what other arrangements they intend to make for providing sex education for their children (*Ref: Appendix 1*).

Once a request that a child be excused has been made, that request **must be** complied with until the parent/carer changes or revokes it. Whilst such lessons are being conducted the child will be provided with appropriate tasks and asked to work under the supervision of another teacher.

Safeguarding Procedures
If a teacher has any concerns about the welfare of a particular child then that teacher will make a dated note of their worries and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Paul Watson, or in his absence the Deputy Lead for Safeguarding, Kath Allen. Any information thus obtained will be regarded as strictly confidential and will be passed to staff on a need to know basis only via CPOMs.

After consultation the head teacher will decide whether the information is forwarded to the relevant body. If the member of staff does not agree with the decision taken they retain the right to refer to the relevant body themselves.

Limits of Confidentiality and legal requirements
Many teachers fear that young people may disclose information to them about sex-related issues. It is important that ground rules are agreed to allow sensitive issues to be discussed whilst protecting the right of pupils and staff.

Some young people may have concerns which they wish to share with a teacher, and whilst teachers wish to be supportive it is important that they realise that absolute confidentiality cannot be given.

Staff need to use the support referral systems available in our school and also be aware of our child protection procedures. (*Ref*: *Extol Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*)

Parents/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.

The head teacher would consider if there are any special circumstances which may temper this right. Any information thus obtained will be regarded as strictly confidential and will be passed to the staff that need to know.

Facilities for Menstruating Girls
Sanitary products are stored in the main stationary cupboard and are available from the main reception and / or Year 6 staff.
Sanitary disposal bins are located in the toilet cubicles in upper school.
When changing for P.E. girls will go to a private place to get changed.

Answering difficult questions
Staff are aware that views around SRE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all SRE 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 SRE 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 and refer to the PSHCE Lead or head teacher if they are concerned.

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

Dissemination and Implementation

Dissemination
The policy is given to all members of the school community. Copies of the document will be available to all parents from the main reception and via the school website.

Our school believes in the importance of staff training to enable them to deliver effective SRE. The PSHCE lead in school should access courses and inset opportunities to assist staff and also arrange in house training for all.

Implementation of Policy
Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors.

Appendix 1: Parent/carer contact

Letter re: Parent/carer wishing to withdrawal their children from SRE

I would like to withdraw my child from the Sex and Relationships Education aspect of PSHE programme within school.

Parent / Carer of _____ Class _____

Signature of Parent / Carer _____ Date _____

Please return this slip to your child's Class Teacher.

Letter re: Relationships and Sex Education Lessons

Dear Parents/Carers

During the coming term we will be learning about ourselves and our bodies. At home you can really help this by spending a few minutes talking with your child at an appropriate time.

At school, this work will include the use of the correct terminology for the parts of the body, growing and changing and menstruation.

All discussions are age appropriate and will address any misconceptions held by the children.

If you would like to view any of the material or discuss the input, please make an appointment to see your child teacher or myself at a mutually convenient time.

There are materials available to you as a parent to help you discuss this with your child, please contact the school if you would like to view these support materials.

Thank you for your time and cooperation,

Yours sincerely,

Class Teacher