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# **YORK STEINER SCHOOL**

## **RELATIONSHIP & SEX EDUCATION STATEMENT FOR EARLY YEARS**

**Last reviewed on: September 2022**

**Next review due by: September 2023**

At York Steiner school Relationships Education is at the heart of our Early Year's curriculum and we are committed to effectively supporting children to adequately prepare them for life in modern Britain.

Children and young people need to know how to stay safe and healthy and how to manage their personal, social and cognitive learning in a positive way. The foundations for this are laid down in the Early Years and key building blocks are put into place which will help the children to develop self-respect and self-worth, form healthy, positive and respectful relationships, embrace and celebrate the richness of our diverse community and understand how to seek help and support when needed. For these reasons, we welcome the new Government Guidance that states that it is compulsory for all primary schools to provide Relationships Education and that all secondary aged children should receive Relationships and Sex Education.

### **Working with Parents**

It is clear that parents and carers are the prime educators of their young children on many of the matters relating to Relationship Education. Therefore, an important part of our Relationships Education will be to build on what children have already learnt at home and, in collaboration with parents, we aim to establish a curriculum that truly meets the pastoral needs of our children and promotes a consistent approach to these matters both at home and at school. Parents have been consulted in the development of the RSE Policy, curriculum and statement.

### **Planning is Key**

In kindergarten, we carefully plan how we are going to meet the requirements of the curriculum and look at the stories, books, songs and resources in the environment to ensure we are reflecting and valuing our children's experiences. Teachers will plan topics for discussion at snack time (including aspects of positive relationships and who to talk to if they are worried about anything) and work with parents to provide continuity between school and home.

Positive interaction is embedded in the Steiner Waldorf Early Years curriculum which, together with Teachable Moments and In the Moment Planning, ensures our curriculum is child led and responsive to the changing needs of the children.

Many of our festivals and community events include aspects of the RSE curriculum. In addition, the RSE curriculum is an item at our weekly Early Years Team meeting allowing staff to share good practice, highlight any issues and ensure consistency across the kindergartens.

## **Age Appropriate**

Relationships Education begins in kindergarten and develops over the years progressing to Relationships and Sex Education for older children. We recognise how important it is to work together across the school and with parents/carers to ensure that children are given the right information in a way that is appropriate to their stage of development.

## **Inclusivity**

In kindergarten, the individual and unique child is at the centre of everything we do and each child and their family are respected and celebrated. We involve families in planning festivals and help children to learn that we are all different and how lovely that is. This way children learn to embrace and value each other similarities as well as differences. We celebrate the life and family of each unique child with a special personal birthday story told every year on their birthday.

## **Healthy Relationships**

In kindergarten, the key building blocks for healthy and respectful relationships are put in place. Teachers model positive interactions with children and other adults and stories, songs and resources all support this further. Children learn to trust the teacher through these positive interactions.

## **Teaching About Families in a Sensitive Way**

We welcome and embrace every unique child and their family. We reflect and celebrate the many different families we have in our community and appreciate the richness and diversity this gives us. Through stories, resources, festivals and positive interaction we acknowledge and respect this diversity and show we value everyone. Each child's individual birthday story gives us the opportunity to recognise and celebrate the unique and special circumstances of each child's life and their families.

## **Establishing Personal Space and Boundaries**

The important foundations for teaching children about *consent* are laid down in kindergarten. Children are supported to understand what is appropriate and inappropriate touching and that parts of our body are private and that no one should touch them. Teachers refer to body parts by their correct name (for example vulva, penis) and children are encouraged to learn the names through imitation.

Children are taught that they have a voice and that it is their right to say if they are not happy about something, for example, 'Stop! I don't like that.' At all times throughout the kindergarten day children are encouraged to say if they are not happy about something. Teachers plan discussions in a more 'informal' way around the snack table to support children in knowing what they can do if they are worried about something. Similarly, children are encouraged to check that their friends are happy.

**In kindergarten, we foster an atmosphere of trust, where children are able to express themselves and can expect to be listened to by their friends and their teachers. This enables them to develop a positive sense of self.**

## **Daily Interactions in the Kindergarten**

Teachers support the children in their play and their social development through positive interaction. In kindergarten we have values that the children learn through imitating older children and by observing the way the teachers interact with the children and other adults. These values are part of our Golden Rules and include the following:

- we use kind words;
- our hands are used for work and play;
- we make all our friends welcome;
- we make sure our friends are happy with the games we are playing;
- we listen to our friends.

The Government Guidance states that teachers should talk explicitly about features of healthy relationships so children grow in the understanding of the importance of this. In-the-moment

planning, Teachable moments, Positive Interactions and planned discussions at snack time all provide opportunities to talk to children about this in a natural child-led way.

## **E-Safety**

We ensure children are safe on-line in the following ways:

- Share information with parents about how to keep their children safe on-line and good practice within the home;
- Respond to children if they talk about being on electronic devices and remind them they must give it straight back to a parent and that their parents must know when they are on a tablet/phone/laptop etc;
- We talk to children about who they can talk to if they are worried about anything or if they have seen anything on-line that they didn't like;
- Pick up any concerns with the parents.

## **Physical Health, Personal Hygiene and Mental Wellbeing**

The daily rhythms and good habits and values fostered in kindergarten support the children's growing awareness of how to be physically and emotionally healthy. For example, the importance of rest, eating nutritious food, looking after our teeth, washing our hands and recognising how they and how other children feel etc.

Children's begin to develop awareness about their own bodies and teachers sensitively support them to realise that their body belongs to them and should be respected. This self-awareness begins with learning the names of the parts of the body through songs (for example, Heads Shoulders Knees and Toes), rhymes and listening to stories that promote healthy habits and values.

Children are supported to develop an understanding of their emotions and those of others (emotional intelligence) and are encouraged to talk to their teachers if they do not feel safe or comfortable about something.

## **Further policies in conjunction with this policy:**

- Relationship and Sex Education Policy