



# Life Curriculum Policy

(including Relationships and Sex Education  
and Health Education)

**September 2021**

West Berry Federation's Life Curriculum includes elements of Relationships and Sex Education, Health education (including mental health), learning about safety and the skills needed to be an effective learner. KS1 children are taught the Life Curriculum by their class teacher and KS2 children are taught by the teacher responsible for this subject supported by teaching assistants. Life Curriculum lessons take place within a two week rolling programme **the subject content can be found on the school website**. Open ended questions and discussion provides the basis for all lessons where appropriate. In KS2, children's learning and reflections are recorded in exercise books. These books show how children develop their understanding and opinions as they learn. Knowledge and skills are built on to encourage children to make good choices and live healthy, safe and balanced lives. They are taught a variety of techniques to develop long lasting, positive mindsets and equip them to manage the highs and lows of everyday life.

## **Intent and Impact - What is the purpose of these areas of study and what impact does it have on pupils?**

### **Relationships Education**

Relationships Education teaches the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This enables pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This also helps them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them. Relationships education is a statutory part of the curriculum for all children in Y1 to Y6.

Our school culture supports children's understanding of healthy relationships by embedding our values of **respect, confidence, compassion, truth, curiosity, courage and endurance** across all areas of school life enabling the children to see and apply the explicit learning from Relationships Education across the school day. In addition, children learn more about safe online interactions and relationships as part of the computing curriculum. Children are encouraged to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely during personal development time and through leadership opportunities. Encouragement to practise new skills across the curriculum and try new and challenging activities helps children to develop resilience, courage and self belief while our school assemblies and social opportunities help children to develop the positive personal attributes of honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice.

## **Health Education**

Pupils are taught about physical health and mental wellbeing to give them the information that they need to describe their body and make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. Pupils are taught 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. Pupils are taught strategies for self-control and the ability to self-regulate. This enables 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.

## **Sex Education (Non statutory)**

West Berry Federation chooses to offer our children lessons about human bodies and reproduction that go beyond the Primary Science, Health and Relationship curricula. These lessons enable children to better understand how their body works and how and why it will change in the future. We believe that exploring these areas of learning in a child centered way at an age when children are curious about the mechanics of the human body enables them to prepare for the physical and emotional changes of adolescence in a safe and secure environment. We aim to timetable these lessons to occur before most children are exposed to confusing or misleading information about sex and sexuality in the media or other sources. Sex education is taught in an atmosphere of respect for oneself and individual choice and at the same time that children learn about the importance of trusting, stable relationships in Relationships Education. Staff teach in general terms about the human body without referencing themselves or other individuals. These lessons do not form part of the statutory education of primary children and so parents may ask for their child to be excused from these lessons by contacting the headteacher if they do not feel they are appropriate for their child\*. The objectives covered during these lessons and the materials to be used are shared with parents at least one week in advance of the lessons so that parents are able to make an informed decision about whether their child is to be included in the lesson. This information also supports parents to teach their child at home in addition to or as an alternative to sex education lessons in school. Children will be included in sex education lessons at an appropriate time in their development unless their parents have asked for them to be excused\*.

## **Inclusion**

Teachers adapt lessons to meet the needs of their pupils taking account the children's age and stage of each child's development. Teachers may:

- Adjust the order of learning so that the timing of each lesson is optimal for most learners
- Teach children in small groups or on a 1:1 basis to better to meet the child's developmental or emotional needs
- Use normal classroom strategies to support children with language, reading and writing skills
- Omit areas of learning for an individual child if they are not appropriate\*

\* where children have been excused from sex education or where teachers have omitted aspects of learning because a child is not considered to be developmentally or emotionally ready, records will be kept to ensure that future teachers have accurate information about each child's starting point. These will be shared with subsequent schools that a child attends if the headteacher considers it in the child's best interest.

## **Respecting Diversity**

Teachers ensure that lessons are inclusive of all protected characteristics, so that children learn that people are equal. Teachers are careful not to allow their personal prejudice and unconscious bias influence their teaching.

Children learn about families and individuals who are similar and different to them. Children learn:

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

How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage

## **Difficult Questions**

There may be occasions when children ask questions that would take their learning beyond that which has been planned for and considered appropriate for their age. We know that children have ready access to information from anonymous and sometimes untrustworthy sources online and so we will always ensure that children's questions are answered by a trusted source and in a safe way either at school or at home so that they are not left to find the answers from unknown sources by themselves. If children are happy for discussions to take place at home, teachers will ensure that parents are supported with the information and confidence that they need to support their child appropriately.

When answering these questions teachers will:

- Value the child's question while protecting other children from being exposed to information not appropriate for their age or stage of development.
- Seek to understand the reason behind the question so as not to offer more information than is being asked for.
- Seek to maintain a culture of respect and honesty where children feel safe to ask questions and ask for help.
- Offer enough information to satisfy the child's curiosity and keep them safe and no more.
- Involve the child's parents whenever possible without causing the child to seek answers to their questions from unsafe sources.
- When questions fall well outside of the normal curriculum (more than 2 years above expectation) discuss the matter with the school Designated Safeguarding Lead and keep records on the child's family file.

## **Visiting experts**

At times we invite specialists to support our curriculum (eg, lifeguards, medical professionals, police or fire officers). These specialists will be asked to enhance rather than replace the teaching of the normal teacher. The teacher will be present with the children throughout the visit. Before the visit the teacher will agree the content of the lesson to be delivered by the visitor, ensure the visitor is clear about how we keep children safe (including how to manage any difficult questions that fall outside of the planned curriculum), be satisfied that the visitor will uphold the school values and ensure that visitor demonstrates respect for all people by using diverse examples and not reinforcing stereotypes.

### **Planning and assessment of learning**

Teachers plan individual lessons using the scheme of work, with a knowledge of the current needs of the individual children in the class and an understanding of their prior achievement. Teachers use assessment within lessons to evaluate the extent to which children have achieved the objective of the lesson. Often this assessment will take place through observation of children. At other times teachers will plan evaluation tasks where children will be given the opportunity to show what they have learnt. This information builds to enable teachers to judge how effectively children have achieved the expected standard of learning by the end of each year. This judgement is shared with parents in the child's end of year report.

### **Evaluation of teaching and learning**

School leaders (including governors) will evaluate the quality and effectiveness of teaching by:

- Dropping into lessons
- Reviewing children's exercise books
- Talking to the children about what they have learnt and can remember
- Reviewing teacher assessments

### **Working with parent**

This policy and the Life Curriculum subject content is shared with parents on the school website. Parents receive information about the teaching of the Life Curriculum annually during the Autumn Term Parent Information Meeting. Parents are encouraged to offer feedback on this policy and the Life Curriculum subject content via the Autumn Term parent survey or at any other time by emailing [parents@westberryyfederation.org.uk](mailto:parents@westberryyfederation.org.uk)

**This policy will be reviewed by the headteachers after one year.**