



Minutes of Parents' Forum 15.10.19

Present: Mrs Seymour (Headteacher), Mrs Johnson (Personal, Social, Health Education/Sex and Relationship Education subject leader), 21 parents with children in a range of year groups.

Agenda item: Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE)/ Relationship and Sex Education(RSE).

The curriculum is based upon a comprehensive scheme of work, designed to ensure clear progression of skills and knowledge from Year 1 to Year 6. This builds on from the Early Years curriculum and incorporates the principles set out in the school's RSE policy and statutory documents.

RSE is part of a commitment to a whole school ethos where all members of the whole school community are valued and respected. The subject leader, Mrs Johnson, and the Headteacher, Mrs Seymour, have attended training to ensure the school is in a good position to meet statutory requirements and lead the PSHE & RSE curriculum. All resources used in the classroom are recommended by Herts for Learning. The recommended vocabulary used for parts of the body is taken from these resources. In addition to the Science National Curriculum, RSE forms part of the PSHE National Curriculum. Puberty and Relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives therefore Puberty and Relationship education is embedded in both the PSHE and Science curriculum.

“It is difficult to see how safeguarding and safety can be good if PSHE education provision is poor.

If pupils are kept ignorant of their human, physical and sexual rights: or how to protect themselves and others, or know where to go for help, they are not being adequately safeguarded.

Ofsted will be inspecting how well the curriculum helps pupils to protect themselves from among other things, drug and alcohol abuse, eating disorders, gang culture, child sexual exploitation, extremism, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Where else but in PSHE lessons are these issues going to be effectively addressed?” Janet Palmer HMI

NB. Not just about protection but also important to TEACH about it.

There are six main elements to our RSE programme:

- **Keeping children safe**
- Gaining knowledge and understanding

- Developing positive attitudes and values
 - Ensuring all children feel included
 - Extending personal and social skills
 - Upholding the school's duty to uphold the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Our curriculum is designed to develop progressive understanding. This is entrenched in the school's culture and embedded throughout the whole curriculum.

The main objective is to support and help children through their physical and emotional development. At Commonswood, links are made between curriculum areas and RSE may be taught in conjunction with other subjects as identified below:

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- Children learn about the concept of male and female and about young animals. In ongoing PSHE work, they develop skills to form friendships and think about relationships with others.
Personal, social and emotional development Self-confidence and self-awareness: children are confident to try new activities and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.
Managing feelings and behaviour: children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations and take changes of routine in their stride.
Making relationships: children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

Key Stage 1

- Through work in science, children learn about the life cycles of some animals, understand the idea of growing from young to old and learn that all living things reproduce. They learn about the importance of personal hygiene to maintain good health. In Religious Education (RE) lessons, children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved. They begin to co-operate with others in work and play and begin to recognise the range of human emotions and ways to deal with them. They also learn about personal safety including online safety.

Key Stage 2

- In science, children build on their knowledge of life cycles and learn about the basic biology of human reproduction. In RE, they continue to develop an understanding of relationships within a family, between friends and the community and that there are different patterns of friendship. They will develop skills needed to form relationships and to respect other people's emotions and feelings. They will consider how to make simple choices and exercise some basic techniques for resisting pressures.

Right now, until September 2020:

Legally:

Schools MUST teach the Science curriculum which includes some ‘sex education’

The DfE guidance 2000 requires schools publish their policy on RSE

(Sex and Relationships Education)

Plus

The DfE 2000 guidance ‘recommends’ all schools have a Sex and Relationships Education Programme (p9)

that ensures ‘boys and girls know about puberty and how a baby is born’

How schools do this is left up to them.

After September 2020:

Legally:

Schools MUST teach the Science curriculum

The DfE guidance 2019 states that Relationships and Health Education (including changing adolescent body) are compulsory

Plus...

a ‘recommendation’ that all schools have a Sex Education Programme

How schools do this is left up to them.

From September 2020, there Relationship and Sex Education is compulsory in secondary school.

This does not require much change for us at Commonswood so we are best placed to meet the recommendations and the needs of children.

Statutory guidance was shared with parents during the forum – See Powerpoint presentation. Parents were informed about the parts of the curriculum from which they have the right to withdraw their children. The importance of children receiving a comprehensive education was explained. Learning is progressive and requires the building of knowledge. **It is important therefore that all children receive full access to this knowledge. This is deeply rooted in keeping children safe. It is about their here and now and their future.**

Answering difficult questions

Sometimes a child will ask explicit or difficult questions in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later or guidance will be given referencing future learning eg you will be learning more about that at secondary school. At Commonswood School we believe that individual teachers must use their skills and discretion in these situations and refer to the subject leader, Headteacher or Deputy if concerned. Question boxes are used as a distancing technique.

Parent Question: How is it decided when and what to teach?

We adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of children. It is vital to build firm foundations of learning and incorporate teaching and overlearning in as we do for all other areas of learning. We review and adapt our curriculum in all curriculum areas to ensure we meet children’s needs. An example of this is where we have moved some elements in Year 4 to Year 5 as teachers feel it would be better for children to be more mature.

It was explained that the scheme we use has been updated in preparation for statutory changes.

Parent Question: What will happen if children do not have the necessary knowledge?

Teachers assess children's knowledge and skills. If needed, they will back track to close knowledge gaps before they move learning on.

Some parents shared concern about not going into too much depth at home in case their child is not ready.

Parent Question: Is it possible for school to communicate the level of knowledge the children will be taught to prepare us for questions that may be raised at home?

We will share the content of learning to support parents in talking to their children at home.

Parent Question: Can we be alerted to upcoming lessons so we can be prepared for questions?

We agree to email out details and remind parents about their right to withdraw from non-statutory parts of RSE.

The school's approach to teaching about same sex relationships and transgender issues was explained. It is the school' statutory duty to uphold the Equalities Act. Part 6 chapter 1 of Equalities Act applies to schools who have legal obligations to the Equality Act in the UK. It protects people from prejudice and discrimination. The DfE guidance also makes it explicitly clear that children should be taught to understand about others different from them. Therefore, schools cannot pick and choose what equalities to include in the curriculum. At Commonswood we want all children to feel positive about themselves regardless of their family make up and their own identity.

Mrs Johnson explained some example lessons regarding gender stereotyping. No parents expressed concerns about the information shared regarding gender stereotyping and the importance of children feeling safe and included if they do not have a 'typical' family.

Parents shared their appreciation for how we, at Commonswood, tailor the curriculum and appreciate the safe learning environment provided at Commonswood School.

As a result of the forum we will:

- Notify parents when we are teaching lessons where parents have the right to withdraw their children
- Provide information about these lessons eg the level of detail and the vocabulary used to enable parents to support their children and answer questions at home.

Since the forum:

We have fed back details of our forum to the company who produce the resources we use at school. We have discussed the points and questions raised by parents. They recognise that although a small sample of parents were involved, it is likely that the questions raised represented parents in general. As a result, they have agreed to produce some information for parents ready for the Summer term. We will keep parents informed about the progress of this.

LINK DOCUMENTS/POLICIES

Aims and Values

Assessment and feedback policy

Positive Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy/Governors' written statement behaviour principles

Equality Scheme

Online Safety policy

Learning &Teaching policy

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) code of practice

Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) policy

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) policy

Science policy

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019

Child Protection policy

DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) & Health Education statutory guidance for Governing Bodies, headteachers, senior leadership teams and teachers

PSHE Association Programme of Study KS1 – 5

NAHT -The link between pupil wellbeing and attainment

Public Health England