

Bessacarr Primary School

PSHE/ Citizenship Policy

Rationale

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship help to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible citizens. 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. Pupils also find out about the main political and social institutions that affect their lives and about their responsibilities, rights and duties as individuals and members of communities. 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.

The Framework for PSHE

The knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught in four interrelated sections:

1. Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of pupils' abilities.
2. Preparing to play an active role as citizens.
3. Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle.
4. Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.

The Framework for Citizenship

This comprises three interrelated strands:

1. Social and moral responsibility.
2. Community involvement.
3. Political literacy

The PSHE/Citizenship Curriculum

Provision

PSHE and Citizenship cannot always be confined to specific timetabled time.

At *Bessacarr Primary School* we believe that it is the responsibility of the whole-school community to promote and foster social, emotional and behavioural skills and children's PSHE and Citizenship development.

At *Bessacarr Primary School* PSHE and Citizenship is delivered within a whole school approach that includes:

- Discrete curriculum time
- Teaching PSHE and Citizenship through and in other subjects/curriculum areas
- Through PSHE and Citizenship activities and school events
- Through pastoral care and guidance.

Teaching Methods and Learning Approaches

Good teaching relies on using appropriate methods for the aim of the lesson or unit of work. All teachers are encouraged to develop a repertoire of flexible, active learning methods.

- Effective starting and ending strategies.
- High order questioning skills.
- Climate building and ground rules.
- Agenda setting.
- Working together.
- Values clarification.
- Information gathering and sharing.

- Consensus building.
- Problem solving.
- Understanding another point of view.
- Working with feelings and imagination.
- Reflection, review and evaluation.
- Circle Time.
- School Council - preparatory activities.
- Drama and role-play.
- Use of theatre in education
- Discussion and debate

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

In PSHE and Citizenship there are two broad areas for assessment:

- Pupils' knowledge and understanding, for example, information on health, understanding of procedures including health and safety, and the meaning of ideas including democracy.
- How well pupils can use their knowledge and understanding in developing skills and attitudes, for example, through participating in discussions, group tasks and activities, resolving conflict, making decisions and promoting positive relationships.

The principles of assessment for learning underpin our policy and practice. We aim to improve learning by providing effective feedback to pupils, actively involving pupils in their own learning, adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment, recognising the profound influence assessment has on the motivation and self esteem of pupils, both of which are crucial influences on learning and pupils being able to assess themselves and understand how to improve.

Clearly defined learning outcomes based on the National Curriculum programme of study for PSHE education assist the assessment process. Teachers are encouraged to collect evidence of learning to make a judgement about pupils' progress. This evidence might include:

- Draw and write a concept
- Mind-mapping
- Display of a community action project, such as at parent's evening
- Presentations
- Observation of a group discussion or group task
- Photographs, films or even video made on a mobile phone
- Web page or blog
- Role play
- Campaigning letters, emails or press releases
- Silent debate - where students write down their arguments/opinions
- Written evidence and extended writing.

Assessment in PSHE education does not imply that pupils are failing as citizens. It is not a judgement on the worth, personality or value of an individual pupil or their family. This can be particularly important in working with pupils from diverse backgrounds or who emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Role of the PSHE Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator will be responsible for:

1. Policy development
2. Curriculum planning
3. Managing learning and teaching
4. Liaising/communicating with appropriate stakeholders
5. Training and support
6. Monitoring and evaluation

Inclusion

The guidance contained in this policy will assist the school and community in ensuring good quality teaching and learning, create an entitlement for all young people and a reference point to support the use of outside speakers and visitors. Our school policy has given careful consideration to the six equality strands, race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion,

disability and sexuality, REGARDS. This is to ensure that PSHE and Citizenship is provided for in a sensitive and non-judgemental way that will enable all young people, staff and the wider school community to feel valued and included in effective policy and practices. In order to achieve this we have included as wide a cross section of the school community as possible in the consultation leading to the agreement of this school policy and we have tried to incorporate the specific needs of particular groups in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, ability and special educational needs in this process.

Answering Difficult Questions

Sometimes an individual child will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed later. This school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in these situations and refer to the PSHE/Citizenship co-ordinator concerned.

For more details see Appendix 1.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers will be prepared to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs include: family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, financial issues, bullying and bereavement.

Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation or opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.

For more details see Appendices 1 and 2.

Confidentiality

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made.

It is very rare for a pupil to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the pupil may be experiencing
- The pupil's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/guardian.

An underlying principle in supporting pupils in our school is that all children are listened to sensitively and objectively. Although the school cannot guarantee confidentiality pupils will be informed of national and local helplines, if appropriate, where confidentiality can be maintained.

Appendix 1

Teachers are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of PSHE/Citizenship. To this end ground rules have been agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach. There are clear parameters as to what will be taught in whole class setting and what will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Ground Rules and Distancing Techniques

- Pupils will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one, teacher or pupil, should be expected to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Dealing with Questions

- Teachers should establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting.
- Teacher should set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way which does not encourage giggling and silliness.
- Pupils should be encouraged to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box, the teacher will have time to prepare answers to all questions before the next session, and will choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate.
- If a verbal question is too personal the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis.
- Teachers should not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child.
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of abuse the Headteacher should be informed and the usual child protection procedures followed.

Appendix 2

Guidance on the teaching of potentially sensitive and controversial issues

Handling sensitive and controversial issues

Learning from real life experience is central to the development of social, emotional and behavioural skills. Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise. Children should not be sheltered from such issues, through them they can develop an important range of skills, including listening, accepting other points of view, arguing a case, dealing with conflict and dealing with difficult feelings. Teachers/practitioners need to be prepared however to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and follow-up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting, and to know what to do in the case of a potential child protection issue. This will involve being clear about issues of confidentiality.

Issues that are likely to be sensitive or controversial are those that have a political, social or personal impact and arouse strong feelings. Those which deal with values and beliefs are also potentially sensitive or controversial. Issues likely to be sensitive or controversial include:

- Family and lifestyle values
- Physical and medical issues
- Law and order
- Financial issues
- Unemployment
- Environmental issues
- Bullying
- Bereavement.

However, almost any issue can prove sensitive to specific individuals, whether they are adults or children.

It is important to establish a classroom climate in which children can express a point of view that may differ from those held either by their teachers/practitioners or their peers. The SEAL materials aid children in doing this by enabling children to establish ground rules about how they will behave towards each other in discussion, as well as more generally through the completion of the activities, and through the explicit focusing and celebrating of the differences between individuals. Ground rules will need to include being able to listen to and learn from the experiences of others, showing sensitivity to diversity of experience and lifestyle, respecting others' rights and taking care not to put each other down.

Teachers/practitioners need to be ready to:

- Judge when to allow children to discuss issues confidentially in groups and when to support by listening into those group discussions
- Ensure that children have access to balanced information and differing views with which they can then clarify their own opinions and views, including contributions made by visitors to the classroom
- Decide how far they are prepared to express their own views, bearing in mind that they are in an influential position and that have to work within the framework of the school's values
- Ensure they take due care of the needs of individuals in the class when tackling issues of social, cultural or personal identity, for example preparing individuals in advance for the content of an assembly/Foundation Stage group time or social, emotional and behavioural skills session or activity if it may be of particular salience for that individual, as may be the case when working on the theme of loss where a child has experienced bereavement.

Ensuring balance

There is a need for balance when discussing sensitive or controversial issues and teachers/practitioners can seek to avoid bias by using the measures outlined below. However, the need for balance should not be regarded as inhibiting a clear stand against racism and other forms of discrimination. Our common values require that there are behaviours we should not tolerate, for

example racism, bullying, including homophobic bullying, and cruelty are never acceptable in any form and should be challenged.

Teachers/practitioners should seek to avoid bias by:

- Trying to highlight a particular selection of facts or items of evidence in a way that gives it a greater importance than other equally relevant information
- Actively encouraging children to offer alternative or contradictory interpretations of information, for example of facial expressions, conventions of deference or politeness
- Making clear that they are not the sole authority of matters of fact or opinion
- Helping children to distinguish opinions and value judgements from facts
- Opening up opportunities for all children to contribute their views to a discussion, avoiding any implication by their choice of respondents
- Challenging a consensus of opinion that emerges too easily.

The Education Act 1996, Sections 406 and 407, offers more information on the statutory requirements that ensure that children are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views on political or controversial issues by their teachers/practitioners.

Confidentiality

Children occasionally make personal disclosures, either in class or to individual teachers/practitioners. For example, they may disclose that they or their friends or relatives are using drugs, that they are engaging in illegal activity or that they have been abused. As there are many circumstances through which teachers/practitioners may come to possess sensitive information about children, a school policy about confidentiality should be developed to provide guidance for all. The following issues should be covered:

- Making sure that all staff, pupils and their parents/carers are aware of the policy and how it works in practice.
- Encouraging pupils to talk to their parents and carers and giving them support to do so.
- Ensuring that pupils know that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- Reassuring pupils that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and then supported as appropriate.
- Making sure that pupils are aware of confidential sources of support.
- Using ground rules in lessons.

Schools must be absolutely clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. A clear and explicit confidentiality policy should ensure good practice which both pupils and parents/carers understand.

It is only the most exceptional circumstances that schools should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Where younger pupils are involved this will be grounds for serious concern and child protection issues should be addressed.

Guidance about confidentiality in respect of sex and relationship education can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/sreguidance.

In lessons teachers/practitioners should establish from the beginning that there is no pressure to disclose personal experiences if children are not comfortable to do so. Equally, if children wish to discuss something personal and important to them, it is entirely appropriate for them to approach an adult individually to do so.