

## Safeguarding Newsletter

Spring 2024

First, let me begin by welcoming you all back to school after the Christmas break. I hope that you all got to spend some quality time with your families and that you took some time to rest. It has been wonderful seeing so many smiling faces returning back to school and ready to learn.

### **Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)**

Thank you to all those who attended the SRE evening that we hosted last half term. It was great to see so many in attendance and ask questions about what we will be teaching your children this term. From discussions it was clear that one of the concerns some parents had related to what has been shared in the media which we fully appreciate. As shared during that evening, our priority at Loughton School is to teach your children factual information and ensure that all children leave us understanding what healthy relationships look like, what changes happen to their bodies as they grow up and why. There is no agenda to push through any individual beliefs and we hope that came across clearly that evening.

As a part of your child's educational experience at Loughton School, we aim to promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive taught programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. These lessons aim to provide children and young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live healthy, safe, productive and fulfilled lives, both now and in the future.

Starting next week, we begin our RSE across school. Just like last year, our RSE provision is appropriate for our pupils based on their:

- Age
- Physical and emotional maturity
- Religious and cultural backgrounds
- Special educational needs and disabilities

so that our children will be able to learn about different relationships, different families, growing up, puberty and their changing bodies.

The statutory guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

The guidance focuses on healthy relationships and keeping children safe in the modern world. It also covers a wide range of topics relating to physical and mental health, wellbeing, safeguarding and healthy relationships.

Learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up will give children and young people the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships and help them take responsibility for their own well-being. In order to keep pupils safe, it is vital that they learn about puberty before it happens. NHS advice states that the average age for girls to start puberty is 11 and

for boys, it's a bit later, at 12 years old. However, everyone's body is different, so some children might start puberty earlier or later than these ages and other people. For example, some children start puberty as early as eight years old and others might not start until around the age of 14. It all depends on when your body is ready.<sup>[1]</sup> As this is the minority, we aim to teach children about puberty in year 5 with carefully selected, sensitive and age appropriate materials.

Our Relationships Education is fully inclusive to meet the needs of all our pupils. We cover the following objectives, at an age appropriate level from the former being taught in year 3 to the latter being taught in year 6:

- being a good friend
- kind and unkind behaviours, including bullying
- teamwork and resolving disputes
- feelings we experience and how to discuss our feelings
- self-worth and self-respect
- important people in our lives
- consent and autonomy
- secrets and surprises
- growing up and physical and emotional changes to our bodies
- different families and relationships
- how babies are made and how babies are born
- differences, similarities and stereotypes
- body image

We, at Loughton School have developed our curriculum to cover human reproduction in year 5 as part of our unit on puberty and in year 6 only, as part of our science unit on human reproduction as we feel that this is more suitable for our children.

Parents still have the right to withdraw their child from sex education (human reproduction science lessons) but not from statutory Relationships Education, Health Education or what is taught in the Science national curriculum.

The right to withdraw children from some lessons is explained within the policy, so we urge you to first read this before contacting the school.

To help you understand the curriculum requirements, I would encourage you to read the following documents can be found on the school website using the following link: <https://www.loughton.milton-keynes.sch.uk/page/?title=PSHE%2C+SRE+and+British+Values&pid=104>

- our policy for Relationships, Sex and Health Education
- DfE guidance that outlines statutory requirements
- medium term plans for each year group outlining our RSE aims

I hope this letter and information goes some way to answer any questions you may have. If you have any general queries, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher. For any withdrawal requests, please send to me at [bragon@loughton.school](mailto:bragon@loughton.school)

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Nana Brago

Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral)

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<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.mkchildrenshealth.cnwl.nhs.uk/children/health-and-wellbeing-zone/puberty/>