



THORNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Love • Respect • Ambition

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), Relationships and Health Education Policy

1. Our Mission

At Thornton Primary School, our mission is to provide high-quality Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), including statutory Relationships Education and Health Education, which equips every child with the knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence they need to lead safe, healthy, happy and fulfilling lives.

Our PSHE curriculum reflects our school values:

Love – Respect – Ambition

It also reinforces our expectations that pupils will:

Be Responsible – Be Ready – Be Kind.

Children are at the heart of all that we do at Thornton Primary School. We recognise that every child is different and that children arrive at school with different experiences, strengths, needs and circumstances.

Our PSHE curriculum is therefore deliberately **inclusive, nurturing, ambitious and accessible**, with particular consideration given to the needs of our high proportion of pupils with SEND and pupils experiencing disadvantage.

2. Introduction

PSHE, Relationships and Health Education supports the development of the whole child.

It enables pupils to develop:

- positive relationships;
- emotional literacy;
- self-awareness;



- resilience;
- confidence;
- independence;
- healthy lifestyles;
- personal safety;
- online safety;
- understanding of rights and responsibilities;
- respect for themselves and others;
- the ability to recognise risk;
- the confidence to seek help;
- responsible decision-making;
- aspirations for their future.

The curriculum is an important part of Thornton Primary School's safeguarding, inclusion and personal development provision.

We recognise that some children may experience disadvantage, trauma, family difficulties, loss, anxiety, emotional difficulties, bullying or other challenges. PSHE provides children with knowledge and protective skills which can help them understand their experiences, develop resilience and know where to seek support.

The revised Department for Education statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education comes into force on **1 September 2026**. Thornton Primary School has regard to this guidance when planning and delivering its curriculum.

3. Statutory Framework

Thornton Primary School will comply with the statutory requirements for:

- Relationships Education;
- Health Education;
- relevant aspects of the National Curriculum for Science;
- safeguarding and child protection;
- equality and inclusion.

The school will have regard to:

- the DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance for introduction from September 2026;
- the Equality Act 2010;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- relevant DfE safeguarding and online safety guidance;



- relevant Department for Education curriculum guidance;
- relevant evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF);
- appropriate health and public health guidance.

Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory. Sex education is not generally statutory at primary level, other than content included within the National Curriculum for Science.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw pupils from statutory Relationships Education, Health Education or statutory Science content. Parents may request withdrawal from sex education taught outside the Science curriculum.

4. Aims

Thornton Primary School aims to:

- promote pupils' physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- develop pupils' emotional literacy and self-regulation;
- develop resilience, perseverance and positive learning behaviours;
- promote healthy and respectful relationships;
- develop children's understanding of personal safety;
- teach pupils how to recognise and respond to risk;
- teach pupils how and where to seek help;
- develop understanding of boundaries, privacy and permission;
- promote respect for difference and diversity;
- challenge prejudice, discrimination, stereotypes and bullying;
- develop responsible citizenship;
- promote British Values;
- support pupils to understand rights and responsibilities;
- prepare pupils for puberty and the physical and emotional changes associated with growing up;
- develop understanding of healthy lifestyles;
- develop financial awareness;
- prepare pupils for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life;
- promote positive online behaviour and digital safety;
- raise aspirations;
- ensure every pupil, including those with SEND and those experiencing disadvantage, can access and benefit from the curriculum.

5. Our Curriculum Approach

Thornton Primary School uses **SCARF** as the principal framework for PSHE and Relationships Education.



The school's SCARF curriculum has been mapped against the DfE statutory Relationships and Health Education requirements. The mapping identifies the statutory requirements across:

Relationships Education

- Families and people who care for me;
- Caring friendships;
- Respectful relationships;
- Online relationships;
- Being safe.

Health Education

- Mental wellbeing;
- Internet safety and harms;
- Physical health and fitness;
- Healthy eating;
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco;
- Health and prevention;
- Basic first aid;
- Changing adolescent body.

The Thornton curriculum also includes additional learning which supports a comprehensive PSHE programme, including SMSC, British Values, citizenship, financial education, road safety and personal development.

The school supplements SCARF with **Pol-Ed and Kidsafe** resources and other carefully selected professional resources to strengthen personal safety, relationships, online safety, safeguarding and community awareness.

6. Curriculum Organisation

PSHE is taught through a combination of:

- dedicated weekly PSHE lessons;
- Relationships Education;
- Health Education;
- Science;
- Computing and online safety;
- PE and physical health;
- assemblies;
- citizenship opportunities;
- school councils;



- pastoral provision;
- safeguarding education;
- visits and visitors;
- whole-school events;
- the wider school curriculum;
- the school's everyday culture and relationships.

The curriculum is deliberately sequenced so that pupils revisit, practise and build upon knowledge and skills over time.

The revised DfE guidance identifies careful sequencing as an important principle, ensuring pupils acquire knowledge and skills before they encounter situations where those skills may be needed.

7. Our 2026–2027 Curriculum

The school's published 2026–2027 curriculum overview provides a clear progression from EYFS through to Year 6.

Across the year groups, the core SCARF units are:

- **Me and My Relationships**
- **Valuing Difference**
- **Keeping Safe**
- **Rights and Respect**
- **Being My Best**
- **Growing and Changing**

These are complemented by Thornton's **Love, Respect and Ambition** core value lessons and age-appropriate Pol-Ed learning.

EYFS – Hazel Class

Learning includes:

- Me and My Relationships;
- Valuing Difference;
- Keeping Safe;
- Rights and Respect;
- Being My Best;
- Growing and Changing;
- road safety;
- identifying feelings;
- trusted adults;



- safe play;
- people who help keep us safe;
- being a good friend.

The curriculum uses stories, discussion, play and practical experiences to develop pupils' personal, social and emotional development.

Year 1 – Willow Class

Learning includes:

- classroom rules;
- friendship;
- feelings;
- bullying and unkind behaviour;
- trusted adults;
- private information;
- sharing pictures;
- money;
- healthy choices;
- growing and changing;
- road safety.

Pol-Ed content includes questions such as **What is bullying?**, **Why is name calling unkind?**, **Who are my trusted adults?** and **What is private information?**

Year 2 – Maple Class

Learning includes:

- similarities and differences;
- working with different people;
- healthy lifestyles;
- sleep;
- body awareness;
- privacy;
- private body parts;
- relationships;
- growing and changing;
- road safety.

The curriculum explicitly supports pupils to understand that people are different while developing respect and positive relationships.



Year 3 – Oak Class

Learning includes:

- risk;
- danger and safety;
- identifying strengths and talents;
- trusted adults;
- secrets and surprises;
- keeping safe;
- relationships;
- personal development.

Pol-Ed resources include **What do we mean by risk?**, **What am I good at?** and **When should I break a secret?**

Year 4 – Rowan Class

Learning includes:

- peer influence;
- pressure;
- discrimination;
- community;
- diversity;
- stereotypes;
- road and local safety;
- hazards;
- first aid;
- healthy choices.

This provides a particularly important bridge between the foundational learning in KS1 and the increasingly complex issues pupils encounter as they approach secondary school.

Year 5 – Beech Class

Learning includes:

- peer pressure;
- healthy relationships;
- sensible use of phones;
- online behaviour;
- drugs;
- school community;



- puberty;
- changing bodies and feelings.

Pol-Ed includes **What is peer pressure?**, **How can we use our phones sensibly?**, **What do I know about drugs?** and **How might puberty impact the way I feel?**

Year 6 – Sycamore Class

Learning includes:

- respectful relationships;
- friendship difficulties;
- addiction;
- vaping and smoking;
- drugs and the law;
- transition to high school;
- preparing for secondary relationships;
- online pressure;
- media manipulation;
- data sharing;
- media age restrictions;
- raising aspirations.

The curriculum explicitly supports pupils to prepare positively for secondary school and increasing independence.

8. Relationships Education

Relationships Education focuses on the building blocks of positive relationships.

Pupils learn about:

Families and people who care for them

Children learn that families can be different and that healthy families are characterised by care, love, support and security.

They learn how to recognise when relationships make them feel unhappy or unsafe and how to seek help.

Caring friendships

Pupils develop understanding of:



- friendship;
- kindness;
- trust;
- loyalty;
- honesty;
- generosity;
- empathy;
- managing disagreements;
- resolving conflict;
- inclusion;
- recognising unhealthy friendships.

Respectful relationships

Pupils learn:

- to respect others;
- to show courtesy and good manners;
- to develop self-respect;
- about boundaries;
- about permission;
- about bullying;
- about cyberbullying;
- about stereotypes;
- how to report concerns.

Online relationships

Pupils learn that online relationships should demonstrate the same standards of respect as face-to-face relationships.

They learn about:

- online identity;
- privacy;
- personal information;
- harmful contact;
- harmful content;
- online bullying;
- misinformation;
- responsible sharing;
- reporting concerns.



The Thornton curriculum's Pol-Ed content strengthens this provision through age-appropriate learning about private information, sharing pictures, phone use, media manipulation, data sharing and online pressure.

9. Keeping Children Safe

Safeguarding is an integral part of PSHE and Relationships Education.

Pupils learn:

- their body belongs to them;
- about personal boundaries;
- about privacy;
- about appropriate and inappropriate contact;
- that they do not have to keep unsafe secrets;
- how to recognise unsafe situations;
- how to identify trusted adults;
- how to report concerns;
- how to keep asking for help if they are not heard.

The revised DfE guidance specifically recognises that Relationships Education can include safeguarding content such as preventing sexual abuse and inappropriate sharing of material online.

The school will use correct anatomical vocabulary where appropriate because this supports children's ability to communicate clearly about their bodies and seek help if necessary.

Any disclosure made during PSHE will be dealt with in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Thornton Primary School is committed to an inclusive PSHE curriculum.

We teach children that people may be different in:

- appearance;
- ability;
- disability;
- culture;
- family circumstances;
- religion or belief;
- background;
- personality;



- interests;
- experiences.

Children are taught to value difference while understanding that difference must never be used to justify bullying, discrimination or unkindness.

The curriculum addresses stereotypes, discrimination and prejudice in an age-appropriate manner.

This is reflected directly in the Thornton curriculum, including the Year 2 work on similarities and differences and the Year 4 work on discrimination, diversity and stereotypes.

The revised DfE guidance requires schools to consider equality duties when developing and delivering RSHE.

11. SEND and Accessibility

Inclusion is fundamental to PSHE at Thornton Primary School.

We have a high level of SEND and recognise that pupils may need different approaches to access the same ambitious curriculum.

Teaching will therefore be adapted where appropriate through:

- visual supports;
- Widgit symbols;
- pre-teaching of vocabulary;
- explicit vocabulary instruction;
- simplified and carefully structured language;
- repetition and overlearning;
- modelling;
- social stories;
- role play;
- concrete and practical activities;
- alternative communication systems;
- individual and small-group support;
- sensory regulation strategies;
- additional processing time;
- structured questioning;
- visual timetables;
- personalised resources;
- appropriate use of teaching assistants and specialist staff.

The aim is **adaptation rather than unnecessary reduction of ambition**.



Pupils with SEND should, wherever appropriate, access the same PSHE and Relationships Education curriculum as their peers.

The DfE guidance specifically requires schools to explain how RSHE will be made accessible to pupils with SEND and states that resources must be accessible and sensitive to pupils' needs.

Pupils will not routinely be withdrawn from PSHE to catch up on other curriculum subjects.

12. The Orchard SEMH SEND Unit

The Orchard is Thornton Primary School's specialist **Key Stage 2 SEMH SEND Unit**.

The unit provides specialist provision for pupils with EHCPs who require additional therapeutic support and specialist teaching.

PSHE and Relationships Education within The Orchard will follow the school's curriculum while being adapted to pupils' individual:

- developmental needs;
- communication needs;
- emotional needs;
- sensory needs;
- social needs;
- experiences;
- EHCP outcomes.

Teaching may involve additional repetition, social stories, visual resources, therapeutic approaches, role play and carefully structured discussion.

The curriculum will particularly support:

- emotional regulation;
- relationships;
- personal safety;
- communication;
- independence;
- self-advocacy;
- confidence;
- transition;
- preparation for adulthood.

13. Disadvantaged Pupils



Thornton Primary School recognises that disadvantage can create barriers to wellbeing, confidence, relationships, attendance and learning.

PSHE is therefore an important universal entitlement for disadvantaged pupils.

We will:

- ensure equal access to the curriculum;
- explicitly teach knowledge and vocabulary that pupils may not have encountered outside school;
- avoid assumptions about family circumstances;
- provide additional support where appropriate;
- provide opportunities to develop confidence and aspiration;
- address wider barriers to learning;
- monitor participation and engagement;
- work closely with families and appropriate services.

This is consistent with EEF evidence which identifies social and emotional learning as particularly important for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.

14. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing is taught alongside physical health.

Pupils learn:

- that mental wellbeing is part of everyday life;
- to recognise emotions;
- to develop emotional vocabulary;
- to understand changes in feelings;
- to develop self-care strategies;
- about loneliness and isolation;
- how relationships affect wellbeing;
- about the impact of bullying;
- how to seek support.

The school promotes a whole-school approach in which positive relationships, belonging, emotional literacy and early identification are embedded throughout school life.

The revised DfE guidance states that pupils should develop strategies for self-regulation, perseverance and determination and that teaching should reduce stigma associated with mental health.

Thornton's existing support from the SHINE Nurse complements PSHE through health education, emotional wellbeing, hygiene and healthy relationships.



15. Health and Healthy Lifestyles

Pupils develop knowledge and skills relating to:

- physical activity;
- healthy eating;
- sleep;
- hygiene;
- dental health;
- illness;
- sun safety;
- medicines;
- allergies;
- vaccination;
- drugs, alcohol and tobacco;
- first aid;
- puberty and menstruation.

Teaching emphasises the relationship between physical health and mental wellbeing.

The revised DfE guidance specifically emphasises physical activity, nutrition, sleep, emotional awareness and the links between physical and mental health.

Where pupils require additional support because of SEND or medical needs, teaching and provision will be adapted appropriately.

16. Puberty, Growing and Changing

The **Growing and Changing** element of the curriculum is carefully sequenced across the school.

Children learn about:

- growing and changing;
- body awareness;
- personal hygiene;
- emotional changes;
- puberty;
- menstruation;
- changing relationships;
- preparing for secondary school.

Teaching is age- and developmentally appropriate.



Pupils are given opportunities to ask questions in a safe environment.

The revised DfE guidance specifically identifies puberty and menstrual wellbeing as part of primary Health Education. Schools are expected to ensure that appropriate arrangements are available to support pupils experiencing menstruation.

17. Sex Education

Thornton Primary School does not teach a standalone programme of sex education beyond what is required through the National Curriculum for Science and carefully considered age-appropriate content within the school's Relationships and Health Education programme.

Where content is taught which falls within sex education rather than Relationships Education or Science:

- it will be clearly identified;
- it will be age-appropriate;
- parents will be informed;
- appropriate materials will be used;
- parents will have the right to request withdrawal.

Parents cannot withdraw pupils from statutory Science or Relationships Education.

Where a parent requests withdrawal from sex education, the Headteacher will discuss the request with the parent and, where appropriate, the pupil. The request and discussion will be recorded.

The DfE requires primary schools to automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from sex education outside Science.

18. Teaching and Learning

PSHE teaching will be:

- explicit;
- inclusive;
- participative;
- age appropriate;
- developmentally appropriate;
- carefully sequenced;
- evidence-informed;
- sensitive;
- safeguarding-informed.

Teachers may use:



- discussion;
- stories;
- scenarios;
- role play;
- drama;
- art;
- debate;
- problem-solving;
- reflection;
- collaborative learning;
- practical activities;
- anonymous questions.

Teachers will avoid requiring pupils to disclose personal experiences in front of others.

Teachers will create safe classroom environments in which pupils can ask questions without fear of ridicule.

The revised DfE guidance emphasises skilled, participative teaching which supports rather than alarms pupils.

19. Teaching Assistants and Additional Adults

Teaching Assistants and other adults may support PSHE lessons where this enhances access and participation.

Adults will be deployed in ways that promote pupil independence rather than unnecessary dependence.

Support will be based on individual need and may include:

- pre-teaching;
- vocabulary support;
- communication support;
- modelling;
- emotional regulation;
- practical support;
- small-group reinforcement.

This reflects the school's wider inclusive teaching approach and the EEF evidence around effective deployment of teaching assistants.

20. External Visitors and Providers



Thornton uses trusted organisations, including **Pol-Ed**, to complement the PSHE curriculum.

External providers may include appropriately qualified professionals such as:

- police;
- health professionals;
- school nurses;
- safeguarding specialists;
- other approved community organisations.

The school remains responsible for all content delivered by external providers.

Before using external resources or visitors, the school will consider:

- safeguarding;
- accuracy;
- age appropriateness;
- developmental appropriateness;
- accessibility;
- SEND needs;
- equality and inclusion;
- provider credentials;
- alignment with school values;
- alignment with statutory guidance.

The revised DfE guidance explicitly states that schools remain responsible for content delivered by external providers and must check that resources are accurate, age-appropriate, accessible and unbiased.

21. Parent and Carer Engagement

Thornton recognises parents and carers as important partners in children's personal development.

The school will:

- publish this policy on the school website;
- consult parents when the policy is reviewed;
- provide information about curriculum content;
- explain sensitive content appropriately;
- provide access to curriculum materials;
- respond positively to reasonable requests to view materials;
- support parents to continue conversations at home.



The revised DfE guidance requires schools to be transparent with parents about RSHE materials and states that parents should be able to view all curriculum materials used on request. Schools cannot agree contractual restrictions with providers that prevent parents viewing such materials.

22. Pupil Voice

Pupil voice is an important part of curriculum development.

Pupils may contribute through:

- School Council;
- class discussion;
- questionnaires;
- pupil interviews;
- lesson evaluations;
- reflection activities.

The DfE identifies meaningful engagement with pupils as a guiding principle for an inclusive and well-sequenced RSHE curriculum.

23. Assessment

Assessment in PSHE focuses on **knowledge, understanding and application** rather than assessing pupils' private beliefs or personal circumstances.

Teachers use:

- questioning;
- discussion;
- observation;
- retrieval;
- pupil reflection;
- scenario-based assessment;
- self-assessment;
- pre-unit assessment;
- post-unit assessment.

The school's SCARF programme includes assessment opportunities which enable teachers to identify starting points, monitor learning and identify areas for further development.

Assessment will be used to identify pupils who require additional explanation, repetition or intervention.



The revised DfE guidance states that assessment should identify where pupils need extra support or intervention.

24. Evidence-Informed Practice

Thornton Primary School recognises the importance of evidence-informed PSHE provision.

The school draws upon guidance and research from the:

- Department for Education;
- Education Endowment Foundation;
- NHS and appropriate health professionals;
- established professional organisations;
- appropriately quality-assured curriculum providers.

EEF evidence identifies social and emotional learning as having positive effects on behaviour, wellbeing, relationships and academic outcomes, with particular importance for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. The EEF recommends explicit teaching of social and emotional skills alongside opportunities to practise and apply those skills throughout the school day.

This supports Thornton's approach of integrating PSHE into the wider culture of the school rather than treating it solely as a weekly lesson.

25. Safeguarding and Disclosure

PSHE may prompt pupils to disclose concerns or experiences.

Teachers and other adults must:

- listen calmly;
- avoid leading questions;
- never promise confidentiality;
- reassure the child appropriately;
- record concerns accurately;
- report concerns in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Any safeguarding concern arising through PSHE will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The revised DfE guidance specifically highlights the increased possibility of disclosures during RSHE and requires staff and external providers to understand safeguarding reporting arrangements.



26. Links with Other School Policies

PSHE is closely connected to:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- SEND Policy and Information Report;
- Inclusion Strategy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- Mental Health and Wellbeing provision;
- First Aid and Medical Needs procedures.

PSHE is therefore part of a coherent whole-school approach rather than an isolated curriculum subject.

27. Monitoring and Evaluation

The PSHE Lead is responsible for monitoring:

- curriculum coverage;
- quality of teaching;
- pupil engagement;
- assessment;
- accessibility;
- progression;
- use of resources;
- impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Monitoring may include:

- lesson visits;
- work scrutiny;
- pupil voice;
- staff feedback;
- curriculum review;
- assessment information;
- discussion with SEND leaders;
- evaluation of provision for disadvantaged pupils.

The Headteacher and governors will receive appropriate information about the effectiveness of PSHE provision.



28. Staff Training

Staff will receive appropriate professional development to ensure they have the knowledge, confidence and skills required to deliver PSHE safely and effectively.

Training will include, where appropriate:

- safeguarding;
- SEND and accessibility;
- mental health;
- online safety;
- Relationships Education;
- Health Education;
- managing sensitive questions;
- responding to disclosures;
- curriculum updates.

The DfE expects teachers delivering RSHE to have the knowledge, skills and confidence to create safe and supportive learning environments.

29. Review and Development

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner where there are significant changes to:

- statutory guidance;
- safeguarding requirements;
- curriculum requirements;
- pupil needs;
- research evidence;
- school provision.

The school will also review the curriculum when emerging safeguarding or wellbeing issues indicate that additional or different teaching is required.

Where significant changes are made, parents will be informed.

Signed: Mr David Ashcroft, Headteacher

Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

To be agreed by the Standards and Effectiveness Committee on 6th October 2026



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