Norfolk County Council

LIFE SKILLS POLICY

October 2025

Life Skills Policy

Policy context and rationale

This Life Skills policy covers The Bawburgh School's approach to teaching relationships, sex and health education (Life Skills). This policy has been subject to thorough consultation with the whole-school community including pupils, parents/carers, staff, school governors and where relevant appropriate members of the wider community such as medical professionals and faith leaders. Pupil consultation has ensured that the needs of all pupils can be met through the delivery of an age and stage appropriate Life Skills curriculum that addresses relevant issues, informed by analysis of public health data and pupil priorities. Consultation methods have included: Google Forms, and conversations/Zooms with the children. Key needs identified were *internet safety, puberty and likes and dislikes.* Pupil consultation has been used to inform the creation of the school's Life Skills/Life Skills curriculum and this policy where appropriate.

Policy availability

Stakeholders can be informed about the policy through Life Skills consultation events, referencing in the school brochure or accessing a copy from the school website. Should a hard-copy of the document be required, the school will be happy to provide this upon request and will also work with any stakeholders that require the policy in an alternative format to meet their individual needs, ensuring equitable accessibility for all. The policy can be obtained in an alternative format by contacting the school office.

Policy values, aims and objectives

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.

-Secretary of State Foreword

Our school's overarching aims and objectives for pupils are **Above and Beyond**. Life Skills is underpinned by a clear set of embedded values and principles that complement the school ethos and permeate through the teaching practice, resources and classroom management of Life Skills lessons. Our school values are: **Resilience, Respect, Curiosity and Collaboration**.

Life Skills is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health in an age and stage appropriate manner. Life skills equips children and young people with accurate information, positive values and the skills to enjoy healthy, safe and positive relationships, to celebrate their sexuality and to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing both now and in the future. We recognise the importance of Life Skills in preparing children and young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. The overarching objective of Life Skills is to support children and young people through a journey of physical, emotional and moral development via the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and values within the framework of the law and provisions of the Equality Act, 2010. Our school's vision for Life Skills is:

At The Bawburgh School we want all our learners to be healthy, happy and safe; able to manage the challenges and opportunities of the modern world. Our school aims to give the children the tools needed to help them to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of

all kinds. We give our children the information needed to make informed decisions about their own health and well being and to seek support as early as possible if needed.

Effective Life Skills can make a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by pupils to establish and maintain relationships. Life Skills will ensure children and young people are encouraged to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

Life Skills will be approached through evidence-based, best practice principles to ensure the highest impact on improving pupil health, wellbeing, safeguarding and lifelong outcomes. The following principles are based on research evidence, supported by a wide range of leading organisations including the NSPCC, Barnardo's, The Children's Society and education unions. They are also supported by a number of MPs and Lords:

Principles of effective Life Skills

Life Skills provision at The Bawburgh School:

- Is an identifiable part of our school curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all the Key Stages.
- Is taught by staff regularly trained in Life Skills (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme, where appropriate).
- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and how they can contribute at home.
- Delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.
- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- Gives a positive view of human sexuality with honest and medically accurate information so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity.
- Gives pupils opportunities to reflect on their values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex and nurture respect for different views.
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the School Health Service and other health and advice services including reliable information online.
- Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Seeks pupils' views about Life Skills so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

Entitlement and equality of opportunity

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an age and stage appropriate manner. Teachers will include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child will be given the opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self–esteem.

We actively celebrate the diversity of our pupils, their families and the wider whole-school community. Life Skills will always be taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law to ensure all pupils have equal access to our Life Skills curriculum. We do not use Life Skills as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation over another.

Through consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum we ensure that we continually recognise and respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity, personal circumstances (including gender identity, faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole-school community) in accordance with the school's inclusion policy.

Teaching and learning

The Life Skills programme will be led by the Life Skills Subject Lead, taught by Class teachers and supported by teaching assistants, school nurses, visitors and outside agencies. All staff involved in the delivery of Life Skills have received specialist training to ensure that pupils receive clear and consistent approaches to Life Skills throughout their time at The Bawburgh School. Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal.

On occasion external visitors, experts and agencies may be invited to contribute to the delivery of Life Skills to enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children and young people. When this happens, our school will:

- Check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with our planned programme and our published policy.
- Discuss the details of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.
- Ask to see in advance the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan so that collectively we can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs).
- Agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with our school's policy.
- Arrange for the visitor to be supervised/supported by a member of school staff at all times.
- Monitor and evaluate the visitor input to inform future planning.

Life Skills will be taught through a range of teaching methodologies, including story-telling, drama, discussions, individual private reflection, quizzes and fact finding, value spectrums, debating, independent research and artistic presentations etc. This wide range of teaching strategies promotes engagement by all pupils, irrespective of preferred learning styles.

Curriculum

The majority of elements of the Life Skills curriculum are a statutory requirement to teach to meet; Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education July 2025 guidance and The Equalities Act, 2010.

Life Skills will be taught through a 'spiral curriculum'. This approach means that pupils will gain knowledge, develop values and acquire skills gradually by re-visiting core themes to build on prior learning. Life Skills will support the school's commitment to safeguard pupils through an age-appropriate curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world.

Our intended Life Skills curriculum is detailed below but may vary in response to emerging issues and to reflect the rapidly changing world in which our pupils are living and learning. If this is the case, parents/carers will be provided with appropriate notice before the amended programme is delivered. Where possible the curriculum will be complemented by themed assemblies, topic days and cross curricular links.

Primary

Relationships Education	Families and people who care for me Caring friendships Respectful relationships Online relationships Being safe
Sex Education	How a baby is conceived and born
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

We use NCC Educator Solutions RSHE curriculum and Jigsaw to support our delivery of our Life Skills and PSHE Curriculum.

Assessment

Pupils' learning will be assessed at the end of every topic to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. Assessment activities will be implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that pupils do not feel under pressure and will include self-assessment tasks that will confirm pupils' understanding of the topics. The evaluation of teaching and learning assessments will be shared with pupils and parents as appropriate.

The quality of Life Skills teaching and learning will be monitored through Life Skills learning walks, team teaching and informal drop-ins conducted by subject leads and/or members of the senior leadership team. The observations and findings of which will be used to identify and inform future staff training needs.

Responding to pupils' questions

There will always be sensitive and controversial issues within the subjects of Life Skills. These may be a matter of age and stage appropriateness or contrasting personal beliefs including those originating from faith perspectives and culture. We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm when they are provided with a safe and supportive space to discuss issues openly within the framework of a class working agreement. At the end of every lesson, pupils will be provided with an opportunity to ask questions in an open setting and will also be provided with an opportunity to raise anonymous questions through the use of an anonymous 'ask-it-basket'. Teachers will answer questions as fully as they feel age and stage appropriate based on the level of knowledge demonstrated by pupils during the lesson. Teachers may delay answering a pupil's question if they need time to consult with a colleague or the school leadership team to construct an appropriate answer.

Teachers can refuse to answer a question that they feel is inappropriate and will never answer personal questions about their own body, personal circumstances or lifestyle choices. If a teacher does not answer a question, the pupil will have the reasons clearly explained and the teacher will work with the pupil to identify suitable sources of information where they can obtain an answer to their question. This may include encouraging the pupil to ask a parent/carer or trusted adult at home.

Confidentiality, signposting and handling disclosures

The school's responsibility to safeguard pupils through a curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world will remain central to our curriculum content, teaching methodologies and supporting resources.

At the beginning of Life Skills teaching the class will discuss and create a **'working agreement/class charter'**. Confidentiality will be included within this agreement so pupils are clear of the limits of confidentiality that can be guaranteed by a teacher.

Distancing techniques such as the use of characters within Life Skills avoids pupils feeling under pressure to participate or disclose information beyond that which is appropriate or feels comfortable. This strategy makes Life Skills more accessible to all pupils including those who may have experienced unhealthy relationships and/or abuse.

Teachers will signpost pupils to information relevant to the topic being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided. Teachers will also work closely with the school's pastoral system to advise on topic coverage so that the school can be responsive to pupil's pastoral needs and safeguarding arrangements can be actioned efficiently if required.

Teachers will understand that an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend.

In line with the document Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), all staff are aware of what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected, including referring to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity. Staff are also aware of need to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those that need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and children's social care. A member of staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this is not in the best interests of the child.

Involving parents and carers

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children in Life Skills and that Life Skills is most effective when it is a collaboration between school and home. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children and young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

The school will provide support to parents and carers through an annual workshop which provides a valuable opportunity to develop awareness of emerging Life Skills topics, meet Life Skills teachers and review the resources being used as well as consider ways to build on the learning at home, fostering strong channels of communication between parents/carers and their children. The school also operates an open-door policy enabling parents to discuss Life Skills at relevant times throughout the school year.

The vast majority of Life Skills is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents and carers are only able to request that their child is excused from Sex Education, taught outside of the national curriculum for science. If a parent wishes their child to be excused from some or all of the non-statutory Sex Education, they should discuss this with the headteacher, making clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The head teacher will outline to parents/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although

detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents/carers propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once a decision has been made, parents/carers must inform the school in writing stating their reasons as to why they would like their child withdrawn.

The school will document this process.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Links to other school policies and curriculum

This policy complements the following policies:

- Anti-bullying
- Online Safety
- Equality
- Inclusion
- Whole School Safeguarding including Child Protection

Review date

The local governing body monitors the impact of Life Skills on an annual basis. The governors give serious consideration to any comments, consultation and evidence of impact.

Consultation with pupils will be conducted on a regular basis to support with reviewing the curriculum to ensure it remains responsive to emerging needs and the policy updated accordingly.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or sooner if the Life Skills curriculum is amended, for example in response to emerging themes, changing pupil needs or introduction of new legislation and guidance.

The next review date of this policy is currently set for October 2027.