MORLEY
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Period Dignity Education Policy

May 26

MORLEY
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy Review Sheet

Morley Primary School

	Version	Date	Minute No.
Approved by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			
Reviewed by Governors			

Introduction:

This policy is for the information of staff, governors, parents/guardians and all those concerned with the learning and welfare of the children at Morley Primary School.

The members of staff at Morley Primary School are highly committed to the care and wellbeing of each child, they have a deep sense of pride in the school and community, and work together to contribute to the holistic development of all children entrusted into their care. At Morley, we seek to provide a safe environment to break the stigma surrounding periods and to promote respect, understanding, and enable open discussions about what girls may experience when menstruating.

From September 2020, teaching both boys and girls about periods and menstrual wellbeing has been compulsory in all state-maintained schools, primary and secondary, as part of health education.

Periods are normal. They are not a choice. We either have them, have had them or know some people who do. Periods are not just a 'woman's issue', they are not dirty and not something to be ashamed of. No-one in our school should be disadvantaged because of their period. Everyone should have access to period products, as and when required, to use in a private space that is safe and dignified.

Period Dignity refers to the accessibility and availability of essential care needed to support a period, in conjunction with the removal of stigma around periods. Education is a key factor in breaking the stigma surrounding periods and promoting respect, understanding and open discussions about what people may experience when menstruating.

Period Poverty refers to poor menstrual knowledge and/or access to period products.

Why is Period Dignity important: According to the NHS, most girls start their periods when they are about 12 years old, but they can start as early as eight years old. It's therefore important to talk to girls and boys about periods from an early age to make sure they are aware of what is involved and how girls can be prepared for their first period.

Aims

This policy will address the importance of accessibility and availability of essential care linked to menstruation in Morley Primary School. We aim to ensure that:

- Pupils are provided with facts about menstruation.
- Pupils are given a comprehensive understanding of menstrual wellness, and how this impacts physical and emotional wellbeing.
- We educate pupils about menstrual hygiene – essential facts and how to deal with related situations.
- Negative attitudes, myths and stereotypes are challenged.

Whole school approach

At Morley Primary School we will support period dignity through our provision by;

- Educating our children in an age and stage appropriate way about periods, period dignity and menstrual well-being
- Challenging negative views, stereotypes, gender inequality and stigma around periods
- Communicating period dignity and related issues through a whole school approach
- Using appropriate language such as period pads and menstrual products instead of sanitary items or feminine hygiene products.
- Supplying free menstrual well-being products to those who need them. A range of menstrual products are available in Mrs Taylor's office, including a selection of reuseable products.
- Hold a talk with the Year 4, 5 and 6 girls or discuss during lessons on menstruation, the availability of the menstrual products and their location.
- To take a bag of menstrual products on school trips or residentials- the bag to be held by the lead female member of staff and pupils made aware of this.
- Provide safety information for each product in an accessible format before the product is used. (This is particularly important for internal products.)

  To minimise the risk of injury from use of period products, we will:

  - ask pupils or their parents/ carers if they have experienced an allergic reaction to period products or other materials
  - provide expiry dates with each individual product
  - keep a record of the batch numbers of products supplied
  - follow safety guidelines when stocking products
  - make sure all products remain individually wrapped
  - dispose of any expired products
  - staff will be made aware of the symptoms and need for urgent treatment of the rare infection - toxic shock syndrome- even though only period pads will be provided in school, in case any pupil is using tampons at home.

The products are replenished by Mrs Taylor when necessary and she will also check the expiry dates on products.

Teaching

RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) is taught throughout the school as part of PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education) lessons using Jigsaw's practical activities and group/partner work. Jigsaw covers the topic of periods and menstruation during the summer term for Years 4 and 5.

See appendix 1 for statutory guidance the Government has given schools for what pupils should learn about the Menstrual Cycle.

The girls and boys are taught together because boys will have mothers, sisters or other relations who have or will one day have periods. By teaching boys and girls together we aim to help normalise and demystify periods. This will also serve to challenge any common myths or stigma associated with periods.

Dealing with 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. Individual teachers will use their skill and discretion in these situations and refer to the PSHE coordinator if necessary.
- Teachers will establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting.
- Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way so pupils discuss issues in a way which reduces embarrassment and models sensible discussion.
- If a question is too personal the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules. No one [teacher or pupil] should be expected to answer a personal question.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse then the usual child protection/safeguarding guidelines will be followed.
- Teachers are careful not to be drawn into providing more information than appropriate to the age of the child.

Confidentiality and child protection

It is inevitable that effective Period Dignity Education which allows for open discussion to take place may lead to disclosures from pupils. It is essential that those teaching the lessons are completely familiar with the child protection procedures. Pupils disclosures or suspicion of abuse must be followed up with the pupil concerned, that same day and referred to the designated safeguarding lead, and if not present their deputy. They will deal with these disclosures or suspicions in line with the child protection policy.

Equal Opportunities

Pupils with SEND have the same opportunities and access to learning as pupils without SEND and, if necessary, activities will be adapted and outcomes differentiated to facilitate inclusion. Following professional advice there are times when some children will find it hard to learn in a busy classroom so may take part in small group or 1:1 activity in a quieter, less stimulating space. Staff are very aware of children's emotional needs and this is taken into consideration when planning provision for children with SEND.

For pupils who may have a sensory issue, with the period pads or may have a fear of the sight of blood, the school will have period pants available and will in consultation with the parents of the pupil make necessary individual arrangements.

Roles and responsibilities:

The governing board

The governing board will approve the Period Dignity Education policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Head teacher

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body and parents/carers.

The Role of the Co-ordinator
The PSHE co-ordinator will:

- Ensure consistent approaches throughout the school by monitoring teaching and learning
- Discuss issues raised at staff meetings and Inset days
- Participate in Inset training and subsequent dissemination of relevant information
- Undertake an annual enquiry into any areas where staff may have concerns or requests
- Collate the views of staff, pupils, parents, carers and the community and act upon these.

The School Staff

- Delivering Period Dignity Education content in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to periods
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

The Pupils

- Pupils are expected to engage fully in Period Dignity Education lessons and, when discussing issues related to periods, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Role of Parents and Guardians

- Parents & Guardians have a key role in explaining periods to their child and that this is a normal and natural part of growing up. It is important to acknowledge again, that children mature at different rates. The NHS recommends that parents should talk about periods as part of an ongoing process rather than a formal sit-down talk. Advertisements for menstrual products may be a place to start or simply ask a child what they know. We encourage parents to talk to their child about periods when they see early signs of puberty.

The school has a set of books in the library discussing periods and the changing body that can be taken home by the pupils to use as a discussion point with parents if requested.

Staff will be vigilant for any children who are distressed or experiencing discomfort due to menstruation. Any medication given to support must only be done with a parental signed consent form.

Staff and children will be made aware, through teaching, that girls can experience different rates of blood flow and that if they feel that their period is different to normal that they need to discuss this with their parent or teacher.

Children will be treated with care and sensitivity. Pupils will be given support and there will always be a stock of menstrual products, disposal bins, underwear and extra clothes. Staff will work alongside parents to ensure that absences are not caused by children unable to manage periods or lacking confidence. Parents will be informed of any issues that arise.

USEFUL RESOURCE LINKS

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/periods/starting-periods/

https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/talk-about-menstruation.html

New text messaging service available for Derbyshire parents and carers :: Derbyshire Family Health Service

Monitoring

The PHSE coordinator will monitor the effectiveness of the Period Dignity Lessons using pupil and staff voice feedback. This evaluative process will enable the PSHE co-ordinator to further strengthen and develop the lessons as necessary; identify staff training and support needs and make any changes deemed necessary from the pupil and staff voice feedback.

The Head Teacher and PSHE coordinator will review this policy yearly. Any amendments will be presented to the Governing body.

Appendix 1

Government Statutory Guidance:

Know about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

Key facts:

The menstrual cycle

Explain to pupils of both sexes that the menstrual cycle is the process through which the body:

- thickens the lining of the uterus for pregnancy
- releases an egg (which is needed for pregnancy)

If there is no pregnancy, the body releases the lining through the vagina/cervix. This is called menstruation (or 'a period').

The average menstrual cycle is 25 to 32 days.

An average period lasts 3 to 8 days (usually about 5 days).

Menstruation (1)

Teach that menstrual blood looks different to blood from a cut. Its colour can vary (red, pink, brown or black) and it may contain lumps.

Explain that menstruation may:

- last a different number of days
- have different lengths between them
- feel and look different over time as one gets older

Teach that after a few months periods should become regular every month (but 'regular' varies from person to person).

Menstruation (2)

Explain that girls may experience spotting (light bleeding from the vagina). This can be a sign menstruation is about to start.

Girls may also get tender breasts before menstruation. At any point in the menstrual cycle, they may also experience:

- mood swings or feeling emotional
- stomach cramps or bloating
- increased appetite
- spots
- vaginal discharge

Menstrual products (1)

Teach that menstrual products are designed to absorb or collect menstrual blood.

Explain that menstrual 'flow' may vary, and most girls/women will need to change their menstrual products every 3 to 4 hours.

Explain that there are different products available for different volumes of flow, and that it is important to follow instructions on products.

Menstrual products (2)

Introduce different kinds of menstrual products, including:

- pads which you stick on your underwear - only need to be changed as often as instructions recommend
- tampons (applicator/non-applicator) - used internally
- menstrual cups - used internally and can be reused
- washable period underwear - reusable

Menstrual wellbeing

Explain that period pain is common. Light exercise can help, and girls should be able to carry on with day-to-day activities.

Ensure that girls know they can speak to a parent, school nurse, teacher or GP if they:

- have pain that interferes with regular activities
- are worried their period is too heavy
- are having periods that last longer than 7 days
- have questions about menstruation (e.g. questions about the look of their menstrual blood)