



Elms Bank
School & College

Excellence for All

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Author: Dee Taylor
Date of Sign Off: 1.10.2022
Date of Review: 1.10.2023



Part of the

Oak 
Learning Partnership

Elms Bank offers a holistic provision. Our students' achievements and successes are celebrated widely. We use innovative and aspirational strategies to increase students' resilience and confidence to overcome barriers to ensure their lives are enriched both now and into adulthood. We believe that at the heart of a student's personalised success is exceptional teaching, learning and pastoral care. We pride ourselves on our overwhelming sense of family and community; where every staff member leads with integrity and compassion to achieve.

'Excellence for All'

Effective Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Elms Bank aims to equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have a safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

Sensitivity and respect should be shown to all children when teaching about personal relationships and sex education:

- RSE is based on respect, compassion and trust.
- RSE is sensitive to the circumstances of all children
- Issues regarding sexuality are addressed sensitively
- The understanding of reproduction and sexual behaviour within the Science curriculum should stand alongside the exploration of relationships.

We want young people to flourish and to gain every opportunity to live fulfilled lives. RSE is about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, healthy relationships, sex, sexuality and sexual health.

Whilst children are given the opportunity to explore their own attitudes, values and beliefs and to develop an individual moral code that will guide their actions, this is exercised within an understanding of the right of people to hold their own views and with the upmost respect for others. RSE is taught in a way that allows young people to ask and explore moral questions. It is tailored to meet the specific needs of our pupils at different development stages.

In our experience, young people most desire to learn about (and have modelled for them) good, healthy relationships. They want to learn how to secure, develop and sustain healthy relationships and how to be able to recognise when and how relationships go wrong. They must be prepared for the opportunities, challenges

and responsibilities of being in relationships with other people. RSE must give young people the understanding, vocabulary and strategies they require to keep themselves safe and thrive within good, stable long-term relationships of all kinds. RSE should give pupils accurate information to equip them for life in the modern world and to make sure they are not influenced by unrealistic dangerous materials. At Elms Bank, RSE teaches the diversity of healthy relationships, lifestyle choices and beliefs. Within this we are culturally and community sensitive.

Young people will be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages the following:

- Being honest and open with themselves and others
- Developing a critical awareness of themselves and others
- Learning to show tolerance, understanding, respect and care for others
- Developing an awareness and belief in one's own identity
- Having positive attitude towards the values of stable relationships for bringing up children
- Acknowledging and understanding diversity with regard to religion, culture and sexual orientation

At Elms Bank we aim to:

- Develop confident and effective communicators who value themselves and others
- Encourage enquiring minds
- Meet the needs of all pupils enabling them to reach their full potential
- Provide children with an education appropriate to the world beyond the classroom
- Help children to live together within the community, displaying tolerance and sensitivity
- Develop in young people a sense of moral responsibility and self-discipline
- Help and support children through physical, emotional and moral development
- Develop in young people the skills and understanding to have the confidence to approach their relationships in a positive way
- Enable young people to move with confidence from childhood through adolescence to adulthood
- Enable young people to live confident and healthy lives
- Enable young people to understand the changes that occur to the human body during puberty
- Ensure young people are aware of personal space and their right to privacy

As an inclusive school we will integrate LGBTQ+ content into the RSE curriculum. This will be approached in a sensitive, age-appropriate and factual way that allows pupils to explore the features of stable and healthy LGBTQ+ relationships.

RSE in the Curriculum - Definition of RSE

According to the latest DfE guidance RSE is:

“.....to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship...”.

DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance'

Our school's approach to RSE is sensitive to the age and ability of the children, but straightforward and factual in line with the law, up to date guidance and good pedagogy. It aims to reflect the reality of young people's lives today, especially the persuasive influences of television, video, the internet, social media, peer pressure and young people's literature.

Elms Bank acknowledges what pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and that RSE is important.

The RSE curriculum

RSE is an important subset of Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE). Together, they are part of broad curriculum and both are equally important to the flourishing of young people. RSE is predominantly taught via our PSHE Curriculum. RSE is also taught through science and e-safety via the computing curriculum. Elms Bank looks for opportunities to draw links between subjects and integrate teaching and learning where appropriate. Staff will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information, which include interactive teaching methods eg contraceptive card games, practical activities, using DVD's or video, group and paired activities, drama and role play

Our school 'Excellence for All' Wellbeing Curriculum aims to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn, achieve and support their emotional wellbeing. It promotes pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The RSE curriculum has been developed, and will be monitored and reviewed, in consultation with teachers, pupils and parents, and in accordance with DfE recommendations. Elms Bank will ensure that the curriculum remains in line with the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance at all times.

All pupils have the opportunity to be taught relationships and sex education*.

*See right to withdraw

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

SMSC is woven into every element of our practice and our school ethos, which broadens pupils' horizons through a range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities. SMSC is 'at the heart' of the school development and requires pupils' to think about the kind of people they aspire to be, the kind of world we aspire to create and the kind of education we aspire to provide.

The importance of human relationships

A key part of relationships education must be teaching pupils the importance of different types of relationships in our lives and what it means to have faithful, supportive, trusting and loving relationships with other people. The focus is upon family relationships and friendships and how to stay safe.

Healthy relationships and staying safe

Relationships education needs to prioritise time to explore and give pupils the vocabulary and strategies to keep themselves safe and flourish within good, stable, long term relationships of all kinds. Young people are taught about consent and boundaries, recognising abuse and staying safe. This also includes teaching about how to stay safe online and the dangers of exploitation and grooming. (Cross curricular – Computing).

As part of staying safe and having healthy relationships, relationships education also included how we protect self-esteem and good mental health. This is based on the recognition that all people are valuable and deserve to be loved and cherished. It also includes education on the impact of social media on self-esteem and mental health, and information about how to find and access help and support.

Respecting others

Relationships education allows for the diversity of belief across our country and our school communities. All young people and members of the school community deserve dignity and respect, these values and the refusal to manipulate, exploit or bully are taught and modelled. Different views, including different religious views, on relationships and sex are respected and pupils are taught to hold healthy and respectful conversation, to appreciate differences of view which they are encouraged to understand and engage with as their own views are formed and shaped.

In recognising this diversity, relationships education ensures that all young people feel it includes them and their families. Pupils from same-sex parents or trans parents, pupils who have LGBTQ+ family members and young people who may themselves identify as LGBTQ+ will feel included and find relationships education helpful. Similarly, young pupils from other religious or other belief backgrounds will also feel included, and their religious beliefs treated with respect and understanding, even or especially where such beliefs may not align with majority opinion. Young people are given accurate information as a basis for understanding difference and removing prejudice.

Sex Education

Sexuality is discussed at a level appropriate to the age and understanding of the young people. Young people are reminded that 'loving relationships' can be

between a man and a woman or people of the same sex. Teachers will use their own discretion in these situations when responding to a young person's questions.

Young people are taught to respect the life choices of others (including sexuality). Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying is discussed and challenged at an age appropriate level. It is also monitored closely and a zero tolerance approach is adopted.

All young people will gain an understanding of the changes that occur in male and female bodies as they reach puberty.

Identity and self-esteem

Intrinsically connected to the above, young people explore questions of identity and how we value our own identity and the uniqueness of other people. PSHE helps pupils recognise their true identity, and teach them that our media-frames, market-driven culture that often leads to body images anxiety can be challenged.

Diversity, Equality and Anti-bullying

All pupils are given the opportunity to understand the importance of diversity and equality and how we must treat each other with dignity and respect. This includes how we value diversity of faiths, beliefs, culture and race, as well as how we support gender equality and challenge gender stereotyping.

Alongside this, we teach young people about bullying and the importance of challenging bullying in school. Young people are taught about the different types of bullying (including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying: HBT), the different forms it may take (including cyber bullying), the effects of bullying and what they should do if they witness bullying or experience bullying themselves.

Financial and Economic Education

Young people are taught how to manage money wisely and given the opportunity to develop economic literacy. In a time when many in our society are financially vulnerable it is vital that pupils are given the opportunity to develop the life skills such as saving and budgeting that will enable them to make good decisions about money in the future and into adulthood.

A safe learning environment

In order for our RSE to be conducted safely the following will be in place:

- Class agreements and ground rules are agreed, explained, displayed and referred to whenever appropriate.
- No one will be expected to answer a personal question
- Distancing techniques such as the use of scenarios will be used to help keep pupils safe. There will be no need for anyone to discuss their own personal issues.
- Confidentiality will be clearly explained. Young people will understand how disclosures will be handled.
- Young people will be expected to engage and listen during lessons, however it is accepted that sometimes it is inappropriate for them to be expected to take part in the discussion
- The meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way

- Humour is an important element of the RSE classroom, however we will laugh together
- Signposting to sources of support when dealing with sensitive issues

Asking and answering questions - (Sensitivity)

Teachers will attempt to answer a young person's questions and concerns in a sensitive, age and development appropriate manner. Individual teachers will use skill and discretion in these situations, and if necessary, refer to the PSHCE Coordinator / School nurse or SLT.

Teachers will apply the following principles:

- Clear guidance will be established about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Group agreements and ground rules will help to achieve this.
- If a young person's question is deemed inappropriate, and the teacher is unable to address the question on front of the whole class, then the teacher will acknowledge the question and attend to it later on an individual basis.
- Personal questions should be referred to the ground rules / group agreement.
- Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that young people discuss issues in a way which encourages thoughtful participation. As previously mentioned, humour may be used appropriately.
- If a teacher is concerned that a young person is at risk in any way, including sexual abuse or exploitation, the usual safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils have access to the RSE curriculum. Children may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. Our school strongly believes that all pupils should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the school's approach to RSE will take account of:

Ethnical and cultural diversity

Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

Varying home backgrounds

We recognise that our pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. Our approach will be sensitive and balanced and promote acceptance of everyone.

Sexuality

Some of our pupils will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual. Some pupils have gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. Our approach to RSE will include sensitive,

honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall actively tackle any homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. Teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead, Orienne Langley-Sadler, Headteacher or the team of DDSL. All school staff are trained in child protection issues. Any concerns raised through RSE are dealt with according to the safeguarding procedures.

At Elms Bank there is a strong focus on keeping pupils safe and the RSE curriculum plays an important role in our preventative education. As part of the preventative education elements of RSE we will teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Engaging with parents

Parents and carers are given the opportunity to understand the purpose and content of relationships education and RSE. Clear and open communication with parents and carers helps them to understand the importance of modelling positive relationships. The role of parents and carers in the development of children's understanding about relationships is vital and we recognise they hold the responsibility of ensuring their children grow and mature into healthy relationships.

Elms Bank aims to work in partnership with parents when planning and delivering sex and relationship education.

This is achieved through:

- Advising parents and carers on how they can answer questions about RSE with their children at home.
- With letters and feedback from parents
- Supporting parents and carers in helping children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up.
- Making alternative arrangements for pupils who are withdrawn from sex education lessons and providing DfE materials for parents who choose to withdraw their children.

*Right to withdraw

RSE is an important part of our curriculum at Elms Bank and it is hoped that all pupils will participate in all aspects of these lessons. Parents have a right to request to withdraw their children from all or any part of sex education, but not

from *'the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction provided under the National Curriculum for science'*.

Parents and carers are unable to withdraw their child from:

- relationships education
- health education
- science

Pupils who are withdrawn from RSE will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the full period of withdrawal.

This request would need to be made in writing to the Headteacher. The headteacher will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have. All records of the discussions with parents will be documented.

Continuing Professional Development

All teachers are given the opportunity to attend in-house and external training in relation to the school improvement plan. In-house training is provided during Induction, staff meetings, PAD days and Twilight sessions. Staff are also encouraged to visit local schools and read current research to share best practice and to develop professional relationships with other teachers in the local authority and beyond.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Elms Bank is committed to rigorous monitoring and evaluation throughout the school. The quality of the PSHCE provision is monitored through the understanding of the pupil's knowledge and understanding, for example, information on health and nutrition, understanding codes of conduct, understanding health and safety procedures, and the meaning of ideas including democracy e.g. the nature of co-operation and competition. Pupils can use their knowledge and understanding in developing skills and attitudes, for example through discussions, group tasks, and learning challenges, managing conflict, making decisions and promoting positive relationships.

In addition lesson observations and learning walks identify pupil's progress where attainment is measured through PIVOTS – 3 strands – Emotional Aspects, Personal Independence and Social Awareness

Annual data report of performance and intervention is identified for individual programmes.

The monitoring of Relationships and Sex Education is carried out by the Headteacher.