

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Non Reg	

We are committed to promoting and supporting positive pupil mental health and wellbeing through our policies and practice. Our first consideration, as professional, adult practitioners, will be how our actions support and promote the wellbeing of every child.

For the purpose of this policy the term 'parent' refers to any person who has parental responsibilities for the child.

Rationale

The term *Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)* refers to the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. Our pupils need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. The school has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, in providing RSE.

The DfES Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Guidance, 2019, states that Relationships Education is compulsory in all primary schools and states that schools '*should have a Relationships and Sex Education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children*'.

Definition of RSE

Through RSE children learn about healthy relationships, different families, respect, love and care, reproduction, puberty, hygiene, the body, sex and sexuality. At The Elms we believe that RSE does not stand as a subject on its own, but as part of the integrated PSHE curriculum. In common with all aspects of a child's education, RSE is ongoing, and is taught as and when appropriate. We believe that children's questions should be answered in an appropriate, honest and sensitive manner, and that, as in other curriculum areas, the class teacher is best placed to decide at what level discussion should be aimed for each class, year group or individual child. Pupils should have the opportunity to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment. They need to feel that they can articulate their thoughts, doubts and anxieties in order that they can build the skills needed to make responsible decisions, communicate effectively and develop healthy and appropriate relationships, which are included throughout our school programme. RSE forms part of the school's aims to offer a broad and balanced curriculum and to prepare the children for the next stages of their lives.

Central to our programme is the growth of self-esteem and taking responsibility for oneself and one's actions. Pupils who feel positive about themselves think positively of other people, develop caring relationships, and are less likely to be exploited by others. At the Elms, we feel that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and more likely to have fulfilling relationships.

Within a Primary element, such as The Elms, it is important to note that a large majority of our RSE coverage focuses on the development of healthy and positive relationships and that the sex education elements are taught solely in Years 5 & 6. This is in line with both our current scheme and most recent governmental guidelines.

For clarity, a distinction between relationship education and sex education needs to be made.

- Relationship education is delivered in any lesson which enables children to establish, grow and maintain healthy, positive relationships with both themselves and others. It is also important to note that it will cover who and where to go if they need help with their relationships.
- Sex education is delivered exclusively to Years 5 & 6 and will involve any content that discusses:
 - Changes that occur in puberty (both physical and emotional)
 - Conception
 - Sexual health
 - Sexual attraction
 - Sexual intercourse

Delivery of Relationships and Sex education (RSE).

RSE involves teaching Relationships Education and Sex Education. The Elms uses the My Life scheme of work, which currently aims at delivering relationship education from Reception to Year 6 and sex education to Years 5 and 6.. It is a well-researched scheme that provides a comprehensive and progressive approach to the teaching of both relationship and sex education, which includes coverage of the following strands:

Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about a safe & healthy lifestyle based on accurate information.
- Learning about seeking appropriate help & advice.
- Preparing to play an active role as citizens.

Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.
- Learning to respect & value difference & diversity.
- Development of the whole pupil - spiritual, moral, cultural, emotional and physical aspects.

Personal and social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and how to form good relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Learning to manage change.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Learning to make informed choices.

The RSE programme is based on the needs of the children in the school with learning outcomes appropriate to the pupils' age, ability and level of maturity.

As a school, we will deliver RSE in a factual, non-judgmental way, ensuring that teachers do not promote one faith or cultural viewpoint but rather provide a balanced approach that acknowledges the wealth of views and opinions of our community and teaches tolerance. All teachers will have responsibility for planning and delivering RSE.

RSE is provided in the following ways:

1. In, age appropriate, planned PSHE lessons; managed by the PSHE Co-ordinator
2. External speakers, for example NSPCC Speak out, Stay Safe allows children to understand boundaries and acceptability.
3. Ad hoc interventions dependent on the arising of a particular issue.
4. Pastoral support for pupils who experience difficulties.
5. Via school nurse.
6. Through class discussion, which will encourage: the participation of individuals as part of a large group, respect for everyone's views, talking and listening for all, inclusion of all adults and pupils and the sharing of ideas with the whole group.
7. Provision of a question box allowing staff to address queries sensitively and appropriately.
8. Special events such as field work; adventure challenge and the junior residential experiences will give pupils the opportunity to work together in a different context and build positive relationships
9. During assemblies, children are given time and opportunity to reflect upon a variety of issues contained within the PSHE and citizenship framework.
10. Through embedding of The Elms' Values (honesty, kindness, respect, courage and appreciation).

It is important to note that all subjects can contribute to the PSHE curriculum.

Continuity and progression will be generated through the adoption of a whole school approach to the planning and delivery of clearly defined learning objectives covering knowledge, skills and understanding.

Sex education is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules so that pupils are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. For example:

- Nobody (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question, if uncomfortable.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- In most cases, the correct names for body parts will be used.
- The meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Teaching resources are selected based on their appropriateness to pupils.

Teachers will attempt to answer children's questions and concerns in a sensitive, age and development appropriate manner. Individual teachers will use their skill and discretion in these situations. Teachers will also follow the following guidance:

- Teachers will establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting.
- If a child's question is inappropriate to address with the whole-class the teacher should acknowledge the question and attend to it later on an individual basis.
- If a question is too personal the teacher should remind the pupils of the ground rules.
- Opinion and hearsay should be avoided, lessons and information should be presented in a factually accurate way.
- Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way which encourages thoughtful participation.
- Pupils may have opportunities to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box. The teacher will have time to prepare answers to questions before the next session and can choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate to address in whole class lessons.
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse the DSL and head teacher should be informed and the usual safeguarding and child protection procedures followed.

Appendix 1 states the learning outcomes regarding RSE for the end of Primary school.

Equal Opportunities

Children may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The 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 the nine protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. To ensure children with special educational needs can access the RSE curriculum, teaching is adapted and personalised.

Parental concerns and withdrawal of pupils

The Education Act 1993 gives the parents of a pupil at any maintained school the legal right to withdraw their child from dedicated 'sex education' lessons. Parents are informed about the content of the Sex Education programme covered in the My Life scheme of work prior to the content being taught. The school asks that parents submit their requests to withdraw their child in writing to the Head who will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of their child. Parents do not have to give reasons for their request, although this information can be very helpful when reviewing the provision for sex education in the school. If any parents decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision.

Assessment, Reporting and Recording

There will be ongoing informal assessment. Parents will receive a statement of their child's progress in their personal and social development in their annual report, which may directly reference one or both relationship and sex education. All teachers, teaching assistants, midday staff and administrative staff are responsible for informing the teachers of individual pupils about notable points of personal and social development, especially concerns

Monitoring and Evaluation

The coordinator will monitor coverage and balance of RSE activities and evaluate the impact of school provision in consultation with teachers. The school will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RSE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision, we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have.

Appendix 1: DfES RSE guidance as to what pupils should know by the end of Primary School.

Topic	Pupils Should Know
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • The conventions of courtesy and manners. • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority. • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. • How information and data is shared and used online.
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know. • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.