



Relationships and Sex Education

The Old School Henstead

Written by:	WJM
Last reviewed on:	9 September 2022
Next review due by:	9 September 2023

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

The focus of our teaching is the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. Building on early education, pupils are taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other contact.

Respect for others is taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

From the beginning, teachers talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts enables pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This helps them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as by the end of their time at school, children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures or personal information, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

Teaching about families is sensitively based on knowledge of pupils, and their circumstances. Care is taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; for example, looked after children or young carers.

A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, Underpinned by our own school values, confidence, resilience, empathy, adventure, teamwork and excellence, in a school wide context which encourages the development and practice. This is achieved in a variety of ways including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing and ways to reduce stress levels, where appropriate Through Relationships Education (and RSE, with regard to the Sexual Education Policy), we teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including neglect, emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This is achieved by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. Understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families

and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages we balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement PSHEE and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

SEX EDUCATION

Part of the Science Syllabus includes work on reproduction in plants and animals and specifically some work on reproduction in humans. Whilst this topic is introduced within the science syllabus it is clear that it forms part of a sex education programme. The school has a duty under the Children Act to provide some form of sex education for its senior pupils although it is, according to the Suffolk Education Authority guidelines, largely up to individual schools to formulate their own policy.

It is the view of this school that the matter of sex education should, in the first instance, be treated as part of the science syllabus whilst recognising that there many associated issues which should be dealt with as and if they arise, especially in the context of issues concerning relationships in PSHEE and RE.

The teaching of sex education within this framework is the responsibility of the Headmaster and he devolves this responsibility to the science teacher.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from these lessons. Should they wish to do so they must write to the Head, in confidence, before the end of the week in which the letter based on this policy is issued.

In all other circumstances staff should respond only to questions of fact should they be raised by pupils in the course of the day. If in doubt, consult the Headmaster. The following letter will be sent to parents in the week before the relevant work in the Year Five Science Unit 'Heart, lungs and life' is taught (this part of the unit is, in practice, sometimes deferred to the beginning of Year Six and a suitable female specialist, or the school nurse may, where possible, be invited to speak and answer questions.)

Dear Parents,

Sex Education

Part of the Key Stage 2 Science Syllabus includes work on the lifecycles of plants and animals including humans. Whilst this topic is introduced within the science syllabus it is clear that it forms part of a sex education programme. The school has a duty under the Children Act to provide some form of sex education for its senior pupils although it is, according to the Suffolk Education Authority guidelines, largely up to individual schools to formulate their own policy.

It is the view of this school that the matter of sex education should, in the first instance, be treated as part of the science syllabus whilst recognising that there are many associated issues which should be dealt with as and if they arise.

At this stage the work is fairly general, allowing a fairly "broad brush" discussion of the changes occurring at puberty, but it does provide an opportunity for questions to be asked and answered.

*The teaching of sex education within this framework is the responsibility of the Headmaster and I have devolved this responsibility to **xxxxxxx** at present.*

*Parents have the right to withdraw their children from these lessons. Should you wish to do so please write to me, in confidence, by next **xxxxx**.*

*Yours sincerely
WJ McKinney*