



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

“Bringing out the best in everyone”

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

1. Rationale

This policy has been written in response to the 'Relationship and Health Education' Guidance (2019), which identifies that *'to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy.'* (page 8).

Relationships Education is compulsory within all state-funded schools, however at Mab's Cross, we believe that to be effective, Relationships Education should be taught within a broader PSHE & C programme.

The Relationships and Health Education Guidance (2019) identifies relationship education as *'teaching the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults,'* (page 19).

At Mab's Cross, we define Sex Education as the teaching of *'how a (human) baby is conceived and born. It is about the teaching of human sexual activity and sexual health.'*

2. Philosophy

At Mab's Cross Primary School, we believe that Relationship Education enables pupils to develop essential life skills for building and maintaining positive, enjoyable and respectful relationships. It explores treating others with kindness, respect and developing an understanding of the concept of personal privacy, permission seeking and giving. Through our PSHE and C sessions and the work we undertake on our wider values, we encourage the development and practice of resilience, perseverance, self-respect and self-worth.

3. Statement of Intent

The overarching aim for Relationship Education is to equip our pupils with the information and skills they need to understand themselves, their peers and the people they meet within the wider community.

Our Relationship Education aims to:

- develop understanding of the characteristics of healthy family life and know that there are different family types;
- develop ability to communicate successfully with others;
- provide the fundamental building blocks our children require to ensure they know, understand and are able to apply the key characteristics of healthy, positive and respectful relationships;
- nurture self-esteem and self-respect in all our pupils;
- be able to recognise the different types of bullying and know how to ask for advice or help;
- know the rules and principles for keeping safe online by recognising risks, harmful content and contact, and be able to report concerns;

- understand the concept of privacy and the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact.
- encourage our pupils to celebrate difference and diversity and ensure that they understand that discrimination is not acceptable and that we all should show respect for those who share the protected characteristics as identified within the Equality Act 2010;
- ensure that all our pupils have the confidence and knowledge to ask for advice or help for themselves or others.

4. Context

We teach Relationship Education in the context of our school's aims and values and our lessons are taught with an awareness of the moral code which underpin all our work in school. Effective RSE does not encourage early experimentation, but should instead teach our children to respect themselves and others. We do not use RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

5. Implementation of the Relationship Education Curriculum

Our Relationships Education is taught as part of our broader PSHE curriculum, as well as being embedded within other informal and formal curriculum areas, such as Computing, Science, British Values, Collective Worship and behaviour management.

In PSHE and C, we teach children about relationships and introduce strategies for managing emotions. Through team building exercises and games we explore problem solving, communication and negotiation skills and consider the qualities that make a good friend.

When teaching relationship education, we adhere to the DfE Relationship Guidance that identifies that *'schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect...Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics,' (page 15)*. At Mab's Cross, our teaching of LGBT relationships is fully integrated into our curriculum, with our detailed planning ensuring that all of our teaching is sensitive and age appropriate both in approach and content. In EYFS and KS1, stories are read to the children which involve a wide range of different family types. In Lower KS2, a range of different family types are taught as part of the unit 'Are friends and family important in my life?' and in Year 6 attraction is introduced as part of the unit 'What is puberty?'

At Mab's Cross primary school, the inclusion of sex education within our curriculum will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be dependent upon the Year 6 cohort. This decision would be influenced by parents and staff who work with the children in school. Sex education (beyond the requirements of the Science national curriculum) would be included if it was felt that the children were already familiar with the concept and misconceptions had arisen. These additional sessions may take place on a whole class, small group or individual basis and permission would be requested from parents. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from some, or all, of the sex education delivered.

The changing adolescent body is included as part of our statutory Health Education curriculum:

Pupils should know:

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body particularly from the age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

The science curriculum;

KS1

- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults;
- find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans for survival;

KS2

- describe the changes as humans develop to old age;
- describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal;

- **Teaching and Learning**

EYFS

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is one of the prime areas in the EYFS and teaching the skills to support children in this area underpins everything that we do. Planned activities and self-initiated play opportunities offer the children experiences to help them to develop the skills to play co-operatively, listen to others and show sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others.

The PSED of our children is enhanced by our PSHE & C programme of study which nurtures the self-esteem and emotional development of all our children. Circle time provides opportunities to talk about how they and others show their feelings and the choices that they can make regarding their behaviour. Weekly circle times allow the class teacher to address any PSED needs and supports the children to develop their knowledge of the consequences of their actions. These activities and discussions are recorded within class topic floor books.

KS1 and KS2

Our programme of study provides a spiral curriculum to develop knowledge, skills and attributes, where prior learning is often revisited, reinforced and extended over the key stages. This provides our children with a wide range of opportunities to develop skills and character traits such as resilience, self-esteem, risk-management, respect, teamwork and critical thinking.

We use a range of teaching and learning styles, but recognise that pupils learn best in this area through active learning methods. Active teaching approaches will be used including games, problem-solving, investigations, role-play, and discussions. Through these activities, pupils will be given opportunities to rehearse the skills and attitudes they require for life.

We encourage the children to take part in a range of practical activities that promote relationships, including within the wider community e.g. fundraising, the planning of school special events or activities that help others who are less fortunate than ourselves. At all times, emphasis will be placed upon developing their self-esteem and encouraging the use of appropriate thinking skills.

- **Handling Complex Issues Safely**

At Mab's Cross discussing and teaching about complex or sensitive issues safely is central to best practice in all Relationship Education teaching, as every topic in RSE education has the potential to be sensitive for pupils.

The school seeks to provide a safe and secure learning environment for RSE that enables children and young people to gain accurate knowledge, develop their own values and attitudes, and develop skills to grow into happy, confident successful adults. We consider it good practice for teachers to:

- provide access to balanced information and differing views to help pupils clarify their own opinions (whilst making clear that behaviours such as racism, homophobia, bi-phobia, transphobia, discrimination and bullying are never acceptable in any form).
- be cautious about expressing their own views, bearing in mind that they are in an influential position and ensure that they work in accordance with our school's values, policies, and the law.
- be sensitive to the needs and experiences of individuals, as some pupils may have direct experience of some of the issues.
- always work within our school's policies on safeguarding and confidentiality.

We utilise several teaching strategies to help create this safe and secure environment, including:

- establishing ground rules.
- using 'distancing' techniques.
- using discussion and project learning methods and appropriate materials.
- encouraging reflection.
- dealing appropriately with unexpected questions or comments from pupils.

Ground rules

Ground rules help to minimise inappropriate and unintended disclosures and comments of a negative nature made towards other pupils, whether intentional or not. They are also paramount to effectively managing discussions that might elicit strong opinions from pupils. To be effective, pupils and teachers need to develop ground rules together and then test them in discussion and group activities, amending them as necessary. Examples of ground rules include:

- we will use appropriate language.
- everyone will be treated with respect.
- conversations will be kept within the classroom.
- everyone has the right to pass.

- we will be open and honest, but not discuss directly our own or others' personal/private lives. We can provide examples but will not use names or descriptions which could identify anyone.

Distancing techniques

Using distancing techniques such as stories, question boxes, scenarios, clips from TV programmes or case studies can provide fictional characters and storylines that stimulate discussion whilst 'de-personalising' discussions. This allows pupils to engage more objectively with the lesson content.

Dealing with questions

Teachers will establish clear parameters at the beginning of the unit to identify appropriate and inappropriate questions for whole-class sessions and for the question box.

- If a question is too personal or deemed inappropriate, the teacher may remind the pupil of the ground rules or promise to attend to it later, on an individual basis. The teacher may then refer him or her to an appropriate person, for example parents, the school nurse, or an outside agency.
 - If a question extends beyond the parameters of our statutory curriculum, for example, references to sexual intercourse, then the teacher will sensitively acknowledge the question. They will then consider whether to consult senior colleagues, and a discussion may take place with the child's parents as to whether this is an aspect of Relationships and Sex Education that they would like to be addressed individually with their child.
 - If a teacher does not know the answer to a question, they will acknowledge this and if appropriate suggest that they can research the question later. *"That's a really interesting question and it deserves a good answer - let me have a think about it and get back to you later."*
- **Child Protection**
Sensitive issues are raised during RSE lessons, thus, opportunities may arise for pupils to make unexpected disclosures to staff. If this occurs, then staff will follow our Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures as identified within the policies, with the disclosure being recorded on CPOMS. Disclosures may take place at an inappropriate time or place. If this happens, the teacher should talk again individually to the pupil as soon as possible.

If a teacher is approached by a child who is sexually active, is contemplating sexual activity, or is at risk of sexual abuse they should inform the child protection teacher immediately.

Staff should be familiar with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies and be aware that Mrs. Poole is the designated Child Protection teacher and that in her absence Mrs. Jones will deputise.

- **Confidentiality**

At Mab's Cross, we inform our pupils that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, but reassure them that their best interests will be maintained at all times. Staff understand the importance of only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguard Lead.

If confidentiality must be broken, the Designated Safeguard Lead will follow the procedures identified within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

- **Discussion and project learning**

At Mab's Cross we believe that discussion and project learning is highly effective and is enjoyed by pupils. Pupils take part in a structured activity in which they can:

- Make connections with previous knowledge to develop more understanding.
- practise their social and personal skills.
- consider their beliefs and attitudes about topics.
- reflect on their new learning.
- plan and shape future action.

Reflection

We consider reflection to be a crucial aspect of learning as it encourages pupils to consolidate what they have learned and to form a new understanding. Teachers will encourage the reflective process through questioning and by providing activities that are focused towards developing thinking skills.

- **Resources**

Our resources are carefully selected to consider the age, maturity and needs of our children, whilst ensuring that the seven different dimensions of diversity are represented.

The appropriately selected resources will be detailed in the scheme of work and will either be located centrally or with the appropriate class teacher. Resources will be regularly reviewed and updated. On request, our resources are available to be viewed on the school premises by parents.

- **British Values**

Our Mab's values are embedded within our curriculum, as we aim to ensure that our children leave school prepared for life in modern Britain. We support the values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect of different faiths and beliefs, whilst also encouraging a deepened knowledge and understanding of the importance of equality, perseverance, and aspiration. Our RSE lessons are an integral part of this teaching and learning.

- **Outside Agencies and Visitors**

A range of outside agencies and individuals are utilised to contribute and enhance our planning and delivery of RSE, for example the school nurse, health professionals etc. All visitors to the school will adhere to the school's visitor procedure.

- **Professional Development and Training**

The PSHE subject leader ensures they are kept informed of relevant changes to aspects of Relationship Education by attending local network meetings, liaising with other leads and undertaking additional research. The subject leader will support colleagues in the teaching of RSE by giving them information about current developments in the subject and needs will be determined on a regular basis through questionnaires, with appropriate training sought to meet these requirements.

- **Equality**

At Mab's Cross Primary School, we promote the needs and interests of all pupils, irrespective of gender, culture or background. All teachers respect the pupils' unique starting points by providing learning that is suitable to their level, taking into account their age, maturity and their emotional literacy.

The religious background of all our children is also considered when planning and teaching. We ensure that our teaching and learning complies with the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.

- **SEND**

Our sessions are accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. Our teachers provide high quality, differentiated learning opportunities within our sessions, but for some children, who are working at different developmental stages than their peers, the session content may need to be individually tailored to meet their specific needs. When teaching Relationship Education we consider the targets set for the children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

At Mab's Cross, we are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and this is taken into consideration in designing their individual PSHE plan.

- **English as an Additional Language**

Children with English as an additional language (EAL) may need to be supported or have their lessons adapted to enable them to be included fully in the lesson. This may include changes such as using visual aids or sharing vocabulary cards to ensure that language barriers are minimised.

- **Support for Pupils**

There may be times when individual pupils need additional help and support in this area. There will be provision made for this to meet individual needs, which may involve working with our Pastoral Lead. Pupils may be given information about school and external agencies that they can access for specialist help and support.

6. Measuring the Impact of Relationship Education through Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Teachers assess the children's work in RSE by making informal judgements through observations, tasks and discussion. We have clear expectations of what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do at the end of each year and key stage.

We utilise ipsative assessment to demonstrate progress, with baseline assessments undertaken at the beginning of a unit, whilst assessment for learning is used within all lessons to gauge understanding, adapt teaching and to promote and maximise learning. Assessment tasks are undertaken at the end of a topic to measure impact, with the children being encouraged to reflect upon their own progress. Teachers record the achievements of pupils and report these to parents / guardians each year.

7. Monitoring and Evaluating the Impact of RSE

The PSHE & C subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of children's work and the quality of teaching, to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the school and indicate areas for improvement. The subject leader will regularly review the scheme of work to ensure that the needs of the pupils are being met and that there is progression and continuity of learning throughout the school.

8. The Role of Parents

We believe that the role of parents in the development of their children's physical and mental wellbeing is vital. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with our parents through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents about the school's intent and implementation of our RSE curriculum.
- invite parents into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns, provide the opportunity to view resources and help support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues.
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy.
- communicate clearly with parents on their right of withdrawal.

9. The Right of Withdrawal

In September 2020, Relationships Education was made statutory in all primary schools in England, thus there is no right to withdraw from any of the content within these themes.

Parents have the right to withdraw from some, or all, of the sex education delivered. At Mab's Cross, the only lesson that involves sex education is the additional session which may be included, on sexual intercourse in Year 6. This lesson may be undertaken, if the teachers and parents felt that this was appropriate for that particular cohort. Parental permission would be obtained from parents prior to the session.

We ask parents who are considering withdrawing their child to meet with the PSHE Lead to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding the curriculum.

If a pupil is withdrawn from a session, their teacher will ensure that the pupil receives, appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

10. Consultation Process

A range of consultation methods were implemented as part of the RSE Policy review, including surveys and meetings with parents, staff and governors to determine their current understanding and address any questions or concerns. In addition to this, discussions were undertaken with our pupils through the school council, which were used to inform our long-term plan. Advice is regularly shared with parents on how to support our children at home, including regular online safety advice. An annual information meeting is held with Years 5 and 6 parents to explain lesson content and share resources. On request, one to one meetings with parents are undertaken by the PSHE Lead,

11. Links with Other School Policies and Initiatives

This RSE Policy has been written within the context of our other school policies. It particularly relates to:

PSHE & C Policy; Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Equality Policy; SEND Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy. Computing and Online Safety Policy; Science Policy; Visitor Policy

12. Dissemination of Policy

This policy has been distributed to all staff members, governors and has been made available to parents.

13. Review Date

This policy will be reviewed in May 2027.

Signed

_____ (Head teacher)

_____ (Chair of Governors)

Appendix A

Relationship Education - Statutory Objectives

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 marriage¹³ 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.
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Caring friendships	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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.
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Respectful relationships	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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	<p>Pupils should know</p> <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.
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