



Excelsior MAT Relationships Education and Health Education Policy

Rationale, Inclusive vision statement

Excelsior schools will give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy independent lives and to become respectful, active and responsible global citizens. Personal Development lies at the cornerstone of our MAT ethos. We are preparing children for life in modern Britain, developing and deepening their understanding of fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, rule of law, and mutual respect and tolerance. We believe all our children can leave our schools confident and assured of their place in this diverse and changing world.

Definition

Relationship Education has been compulsory in all primary schools since September 2020 and new guidance published in 2025 must be in place by September 2026. RSHE (Relationships Education, Relationships and sex education (RSE) and Health Education) statutory guidance (July 2025) states that high quality teaching “can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness” (p2, 2025)

“The focus for primary relationships education should be on teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.” (P7, 2025)

Aims

At Excelsior we will deliver Relationship Education within our Personal Development curriculum. Our aims in Relationship Education are to:

- Develop skills and attitudes in our pupils that will enable them to participate fully and contribute positively whilst thriving in modern Britain.
- “To put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds.” (DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: FAQs)

- Ensure that pupils understand Britain is a country rich in diversity and difference. Individual characteristics make people unique; everyone has differences, and everyone is welcome in our school.
- Develop an inclusive environment with an understanding and appreciation of British values: democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faith or belief and those without faith.
- Provide clear information to parents and carers about the Relationship Education curriculum and content in an accessible way so that they can support what their child is learning in school with their own teaching at home.
- Ask for feedback on this Relationship Education policy from parents and carers before it is ratified by Governors and in the future when it is amended. The RSHE guidance (2025) states, "Schools should engage with parents on the content of RSHE and be transparent with parents about all materials used in RSHE. All materials should be available to parents" (2025, P5)

At Excelsior MAT, we welcome constructive dialogue so that we reach a mutual understanding of the aims. We will provide opportunities for parents and carers to air their views about our curriculum, and we will consider all views given.

- Provide opportunities for parents and carers to join the school in the delivery of Relationship Education. This will be achieved through parent workshops where materials will be shared, and open lessons each year.
- Enable pupils to reflect on their own experiences, considering how they are developing character, personally and socially. Teach co-operation skills where pupils behave with integrity, feeling confident about their emerging selves and how they can contribute to school and to society.
- Enable children to reflect on their own mental health and consider how their actions affect the mental health of others. The RSHE (2025) guidance states teaching should, "enable pupils to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to understand the links between physical and mental health, to recognise when things are not right in their own health or the health of others and to seek support when needed." (2025, p20)
- Provide opportunities for pupils to explore attitudes and beliefs that are different to their own or those of their family.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to consider the meaning and value of community and community cohesion in Britain today. To understand that communities are made up of people with diverse characteristics; for example, disabilities, ethnicities, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, faith, age. British communities are diverse, and difference is a positive not a negative.
- Develop an understanding of the different families that exist in Britain today including families with same sex parents. The RHSE guidance (2025) says, "Schools should be sensitive to pupils' circumstances, recognising that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children, and can include single parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, young carers, kinship carers, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers. Teaching should illustrate a wide range of family structures in a positive way, and care should be taken to ensure that children are not stigmatised based on their home circumstances (p7). The guidance goes on to say, "We strongly encourage primary schools to teach about healthy loving relationships, and to include same-sex parents along with other family arrangements when discussing families." (2025, p36)

- Develop an understanding of stereotypes and the harm they can do. Ensure all children know they are welcome and included regardless of any perceived expectation around biological sex. The DfE guidance (2025) states, “Pupils should also be taught the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment. This should recognise that people have legal rights by virtue of their biological sex which are different from the rights of those of the opposite sex with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Pupils should also be taught to recognise that people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, as with the other protected characteristics, have protection from discrimination and should be treated with respect and dignity”
- Recent guidance emphasises teaching biological sex and taking a cautious, safeguarding -led approach to issues related to gender questioning children. At Excelsior schools, we will teach children to recognise and consider the different views that currently exist in the UK today around biological sex, gender and acceptance, without the teacher giving their own opinion on the issue. Teachers will use oracy skills to navigate conversations without stating opinions or influencing the opinions of children other than ensuring children understand everyone is welcome in our school. RHSE guidance (2025) states, “In teaching this, schools should be mindful that beyond the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment there is significant debate, and they should be careful not to endorse any particular view or teach it as fact. For example, they should not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity. Schools should avoid language and activities which repeat or enforce gender stereotypes. Schools should be mindful to avoid any suggestion that social transition is a simple solution to feelings of distress or discomfort.” (2025, p36) (Please see Excelsior MAT Social Transition policy, 2026).
- At Excelsior we believe it is not for any adult to question or define a child’s sex or gender. When teaching about this topic, we will use resources that focus on relationships between characters and responses to situations that enable discussion and debate. At all times we will encourage children to consider different points of view and form their own opinions. “Schools should encourage young people to consider how to express their views while remaining respectful of the opinions of others. Schools should be clear that bullying or disrespectful language or behaviour is never appropriate.” (RHSE 2025, p36)
- At no point will Excelsior staff perpetuate stereotypes or encourage children to question their gender. We will use resources that show different characters facing different challenges in their lives. Our teaching focus will be on citizenship and respect for people who hold views you may not agree on. The RSHE guidance (2025) says., “Where schools decide to use external resources, they should avoid materials that use cartoons or diagrams that oversimplify this topic, that could be interpreted as being aimed at younger children, or that perpetuate stereotypes or encourage pupils to question their gender. Schools should consult parents on the content of external resources on this topic in advance and make all materials available to them on request as set out in the section on openness with parents” (2025, p37) As part of our aims to work in partnership with parents, we will make the resources we use available for parents and carers to see on request.
- Develop an understanding of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010 and gain a historical perspective of how equality and freedoms for all groups facing discrimination have been won over time and should not be taken for granted. The RSHE guidance (2025) states, “Pupils should understand the importance of equality and respect throughout their education. They should learn about all protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment, by the end of their secondary education (2025, p36)

- Learn to understand, accept and respect a diverse community as something that generates benefits for all members. Develop an enthusiasm for diversity and difference in order to thrive as part of a vibrant and cohesive British society, therefore being resilient to potential radicalisation in later life.
- Teach children to be proud of their emerging identity, be that through religious affiliation, culture etc
- Teach pupils about internet safety and harms in order to enable children to access online communication safely and securely, for example, recognising the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology and social media which includes online friendships, online harms, scams and manipulation, fraud, financial exploitation, gaming risks, sharing images, social media, age restrictions, data privacy, digital consent, harmful influences, AI generated content and personal data protection.
- Teach children how to report concerns online and how to use technology safely.
- Teach pupils to be aware of and understand the dangers of misinformation of AI generated content and manipulated digital media.

Planning

Relationship and Health Education requirements, including mental well-being, emotions, resilience, physical health, healthy eating, sleep, physical activity, dental health, drugs, alcohol and tobacco awareness and basic first aid are taught explicitly within PD but also across other areas of the curriculum such as science, PE Opal.

The Personal Development curriculum, is delivered by class teachers through weekly lessons in each year group and through Rights Respecting Schools sessions. It can also delivered, should schools choose to use them, through weekly assemblies where children discuss images taken from current news stories and relate those stories to their own lives while exploring and considering the lives of others.

Planning will be provided by the Excelsior Personal Development Lead and Personal Development lead for each school in the Trust. The PD Lead in each school is responsible for ensuring the Excelsior equality ethos is delivered, and will agree with the Head Teacher, SLT and governors the planning to use. Excelsior schools are free to decide how they deliver the inclusive vision statement.

- We will be using the Excelsior MAT PD policy to deliver PD across the school. We will also use the No Outsiders ethos and scheme of work to prepare children for life in modern Britain, putting in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds.
- We will use picture books in our delivery of No Outsiders lessons from Reception to Year 6. The picture books will introduce pupils to a range of characters and situations stimulating discussions and debates around equality and belonging. We want children to see themselves in the resources we use, and also see people with different characteristics to their own. Our aim is to reflect the rich diversity that exists in modern Britain and teach difference as a positive not a negative.
- We will deliver weekly No Outsiders assemblies to develop understanding of life in modern Britain and around the world. These assemblies will use one image every week taken from

current affairs, to reflect the diversity that exists in the modern world and promote global citizenship. In KS1, the assemblies will focus on understanding and embracing diversity and difference. These assemblies are age appropriate in that there is no focus or suggestion of discrimination or prejudice in the images used. In KS2 there is more focus on challenges to equality and there is always a solution given where the subject overcomes adversity to find a solution. Children in all key stages are encouraged to consider and voice their own opinions in response to the images and stories.

- We will also use these assemblies to teach oracy. The focus on holding different opinions and having the ability to agree and disagree with each other is a key strength of oracy that aligns with a No Outsiders ethos. Children are not taught there is a correct answer to the discussions; rather, children are taught there are different points of view and asked to consider their own responses. All opinions are valid and children are taught to discuss and debate respectfully. Our No Outsiders ethos means while we may disagree, we can disagree respectfully and consider different opinions: at our school there are no outsiders because everyone is welcome and everyone belongs.
- We embrace diversity at Excelsior Schools and we encourage children to do the same. We do not have to celebrate diversity; there is nothing to celebrate about our individual characteristics as we all have them. Rather, we encourage children to recognise their own characteristics and be proud of the person they are. At Excelsior, it is imperative that every person knows they belong. All of our PD work teaches children to be non-judgmental and accepting.

Equality of Opportunity

At Excelsior we consider that all pupils and adults should have equal access to Relationship Education, regardless of gender, race, faith, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment.

Each Excelsior school will ensure where support is needed for a pupil with additional needs to access a Relationship Education lesson, it is provided through differentiated resources, adapted teaching methods, accessibility and additional support where appropriate.

The right to withdraw

- Children may not be withdrawn from Relationship Education lessons. There is no reference to sex or reproduction in Relationship Education lessons. Parents are invited to view any new materials being used to teach Relationships Education as and when they are introduced. Children may be withdrawn from Sex Education lessons if parents wish, which are timetabled to be delivered in summer 2 in every year group. Parents cannot withdraw children from National Curriculum Science. Parents will be informed before the lesson take place and invited to view the resources used in order to make informed choices. Please see The Excelsior Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Policy

Assessment, record keeping and monitoring

Pupil voice interviews held by members of the Senior Leadership Team in each school and the Personal Development Lead for the Trust will enable each school to assess attitudes and understanding of the curriculum and school ethos.

Regular book monitoring will also take place along with observations through learning walks and informal pop-ins.

Resources

Each school in the trust will appoint a Personal Development lead to oversee Relationship Education. The Personal Development lead for Excelsior will support and provide resources for each school. Schools are free to decide which materials they use. The inclusive vision statement must be met in all schools.

New parents to the school and parents of children who join in Reception will have the opportunity to view resources during a mutually suitable time.

Staff training

At Excelsior we expect all staff to actively support and promote the aims of the Relationship Education policy and Personal Development curriculum. The Personal Development lead for the Trust will lead staff CPD each year to ensure all staff are confident in their contribution to the ethos.

Links with other policies

This Relationship Education Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Excelsior Personal Development Policy (PD)
- The Excelsior Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Policy

Andrew Moffat

Excelsior Personal Development lead

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