



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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Review Date	September 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027

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Purpose of policy

This policy covers ELKOLET's approach to Personal, Social, Health, Economic education curriculum, including the statutory Relationships and Sex Education.

In today's ever-evolving world, young people are navigating a multifaceted landscape that seamlessly blends online and offline experiences. While this dynamic offers numerous opportunities, it also presents them with various complexities, challenges, and potential hazards. Within this context, it becomes crucial to equip young individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain their safety, well-being, and balanced management of their academic, personal, and social spheres. The desired outcomes of our program include:

- Empowering students to make well-informed decisions concerning their health, well-being, and interpersonal relationships.
- Preparing students for the responsibilities, opportunities, and life experiences they will encounter as they transition into adulthood.

Definitions

Relationships and Sex Education is about the physical, emotional, sexual, moral, social, and cultural development of students, and involved learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity, and personal identity.

Roles and Responsibilities

The PSHE curriculum is overseen by the Director of Education and Family Support and is mainly delivered by themselves and other experienced staff within ELKOLET. The staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Responding to the needs of individual students

ELKOLET staff recognize that effective Relationship and Sex Education (RSE), which fosters an understanding of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in relationships, may sometimes uncover child protection concerns. In such cases, staff will adhere to ELKOLET's standard safeguarding protocols, involving consultation with the designated safeguarding leads.

Curriculum Design

As ELKOLET is not the full-time provider of education for students, the Commissioning School or Agency retains the responsibility to ensure the student receives education of the full curriculum. Nevertheless, ELKOLET is committed to aiding in the holistic development of students and therefore provides lessons and integration of PSHE education within our curriculum.

As the majority of our cohort are classed as vulnerable, it is especially important for ELKOLET to cover the PSHE curriculum and in turn relationship and sex education as well.

- **Healthy Relationships:** Lessons on building healthy, respectful relationships, understanding consent, and recognizing abusive or coercive behaviour.
- **Sexual Health:** Information about human reproduction, contraception, STIs, pregnancy, and sexual health services.
- **Respect and Equality:** Teaching about different types of relationships, including LGBTQ+ relationships, and challenging gender stereotypes.

- Online Behaviour: Educating about the dangers of sharing explicit content, sexting, AI and deepfakes, and the potential consequences of online activities.
- Consent and Boundaries: Understanding personal boundaries, the legal implications of consent, and the importance of communication in relationships.

Accessibility for all

ELKOLET recognises that students attending our Alternative Provision may have additional or differing needs from those in mainstream education. The PSHE and RSE curriculum will therefore be adapted where appropriate to reflect:

- age and developmental stage
- SEND and communication needs
- previous educational experience
- safeguarding concerns
- trauma or adverse experiences
- additional vulnerabilities
- cultural and family circumstances
- individual learning needs
- emotional maturity

The curriculum will be modified and adapted to students' needs by:

- Breaking down learning outcomes into smaller steps so that they form the basis of a lesson or a series of a lessons.
- Revisiting, reinforcing, consolidating, and generalising previous learning, as well as introducing new concepts, knowledge and skills.
- Revisiting content through cross-curricular learning and/or throughout other activities in school.
- Offering both explicit and implicit learning opportunities and experiences Staff are aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents/guardians/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education taught within PSHE. A request to withdraw should be put into writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Director of Education and Family Support will discuss the request with parents/guardians/carers and take the appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

As ELKOLET is not the full time provider of education, the request to withdraw can only be applied to subjects taught at ELKOLET. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian/carer to also file a request to withdraw with their child's Commissioner e.g. mainstream school.

Appendix 1- Curriculum

Curriculum Aims

ELKOLET students should be working towards being able to:

- Understand what constitutes a healthy and respectful relationship.
- Recognise appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and boundaries.
- Understand the meaning and importance of consent.
- Recognise controlling, coercive, manipulative and abusive behaviour.
- Understand sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- Understand the risks associated with exploitation and grooming.
- Understand key aspects of sexual and reproductive health.
- Understand contraception, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections at an age-appropriate level.
- Understand the risks associated with pornography and unrealistic representations of sex.
- Understand online relationship risks, including intimate-image sharing.
- Recognise the potential risks associated with AI-generated and manipulated sexual content.
- Know how to respond when they feel unsafe, pressured or uncomfortable.
- Know where to obtain reliable information and professional support.
- Develop confidence in communicating boundaries and respecting those of others.
- Develop the knowledge and resilience necessary to make safer choices.

Curriculum Structure

RSE is delivered as part of ELKOLET's wider personal development curriculum.

Teaching will normally be organised into the following curriculum areas:

Curriculum Area	Key Focus
Healthy Relationships	Respect, trust, communication and equality
Boundaries and Consent	Personal space, consent, pressure and decision-making
Puberty and Development	Physical and emotional development
Sexual Health	Contraception, pregnancy and STIs
Sexual Behaviour and Risk	Readiness, pressure, consequences and safety
Abuse and Exploitation	Grooming, coercion, exploitation and abuse
Sexual Harassment and Violence	Recognition, prevention and reporting
Online Relationships	Social media, messaging, pornography and image sharing
Digital and AI Safety	Deepfakes, manipulated images and AI-generated sexual content

Support and Help-Seeking	Trusted adults, professional services and safeguarding
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The order and depth of teaching may be adjusted according to the age, maturity, prior knowledge and safeguarding needs of each cohort.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum Design

The Key Stage 3 programme focuses on establishing a strong understanding of healthy relationships, personal boundaries, physical development and personal safety.

Unit 1 – Healthy Relationships

Students will explore:

- different types of relationships;
- friendship and romantic relationships;
- characteristics of healthy relationships;
- trust and communication;
- respect and equality;
- managing disagreements;
- ending relationships appropriately;
- recognising unhealthy relationships.

Students will develop the ability to:

- identify positive relationship characteristics;
- communicate respectfully;
- recognise unhealthy behaviour;
- seek help when relationships become unsafe.

Unit 2 – Boundaries and Consent

Students will explore:

- personal space;
- physical and emotional boundaries;
- consent;
- communicating boundaries;
- respecting another person's boundaries;
- pressure and manipulation;
- withdrawing consent;
- situations where a person cannot provide meaningful consent.

Key message:

Consent must be freely given and respected. Nobody should be pressured, threatened or manipulated into sexual or physical activity.

Unit 3 – Puberty and Development

Students will explore:

- physical changes during puberty;
- emotional changes;
- body confidence;
- personal hygiene;
- menstruation;
- erections and ejaculation;
- reproductive systems;
- emotional wellbeing;
- managing changes and seeking support.

Teaching will recognise that puberty occurs differently for different people and that there is no single "normal" experience.

Unit 4 – Online Relationships

Students will explore:

- social media;
- online friendships and relationships;
- communicating online;
- online identity;
- pressure to share images;
- intimate images;
- grooming;
- inappropriate contact;
- cyberbullying;
- reporting and blocking.

Students will understand that behaviour online can have significant real-world consequences.

Unit 5 – Sexual Harassment and Exploitation

Students will explore:

- sexual harassment;
- sexual comments and jokes;
- unwanted sexual attention;
- inappropriate touching;

- grooming;
- manipulation;
- exploitation;
- recognising unsafe situations;
- seeking help.

The curriculum will reinforce that harmful sexual behaviour should not be dismissed as "banter".

Key Stage 4 Curriculum Design

The Key Stage 4 programme develops students' understanding of relationships, sexual health, consent, risk and personal responsibility.

Unit 1 – Healthy Romantic Relationships

Students will explore:

- emotional intimacy;
- trust;
- communication;
- compatibility;
- respect;
- boundaries;
- break-ups;
- jealousy;
- controlling behaviour;
- coercive control;
- domestic abuse.

Students will consider how healthy relationships differ from relationships based on control, fear or dependency.

Unit 2 – Consent and Sexual Decision-Making

Students will explore:

- what consent means;
- freely given consent;
- ongoing consent;
- withdrawing consent;
- pressure;
- manipulation;
- intoxication;
- capacity to consent;
- respecting another person's decision.

Students will develop practical strategies for communicating boundaries and responding to pressure.

Unit 3 – Sexual Health

Students will learn about:

- contraception;
- effectiveness of different contraceptive methods;
- condoms and safer sex;
- pregnancy;
- sexually transmitted infections;
- testing and treatment;
- sexual health services;
- reliable sources of information.

The curriculum will emphasise that students should seek professional advice rather than relying on social media, pornography or peers for medical information.

Unit 4 – Pornography and Sexualised Media

Students will explore:

- what pornography is;
- unrealistic expectations created by pornography;
- consent and pornography;
- representation of bodies and relationships;
- commercial and exploitative aspects of pornography;
- potential impact on attitudes and expectations;
- legal and safeguarding considerations.

Students will be encouraged to distinguish between entertainment/media and realistic representations of healthy relationships and sexual activity.

Unit 5 – Sexual Harassment, Violence and Abuse

Students will explore:

- sexual harassment;
- sexual assault;
- sexual violence;
- coercion;
- controlling behaviour;
- abuse within relationships;
- victim blaming;
- supporting someone who discloses abuse;
- how and where to seek help.

Students will understand that responsibility for abuse lies with the person who chooses to cause harm.

Unit 6 – Online Sexual Behaviour and Image Sharing

Students will explore:

- sexting and intimate-image sharing;
- pressure to send images;
- forwarding images;
- image-based abuse;
- online blackmail and threats;
- grooming;
- fake profiles;
- digital footprints;
- reporting and obtaining help.

Students will be taught to seek adult help if they are threatened, pressured or exploited online.

Unit 7 – Artificial Intelligence and Digital Manipulation

Students will explore emerging digital risks, including:

- AI-generated images;
- manipulated photographs;
- deepfakes;
- sexualised synthetic content;
- impersonation;
- non-consensual sexualised images;
- the impact of manipulated content on victims;
- reporting harmful content.

The curriculum will emphasise that technology does not remove the need for consent or make harmful behaviour acceptable.

Exploitation and Grooming

Given the particular safeguarding needs that may arise within Alternative Provision, exploitation and grooming will be embedded throughout the curriculum.

Students will explore:

- what grooming is;
- how trust can be manipulated;
- gifts and favours;

- secrecy;
- isolation;
- emotional manipulation;
- threats;
- sexual exploitation;
- criminal exploitation;
- online grooming;
- recognising warning signs;
- how to seek help.

Teaching will make clear that exploitation is not the victim's fault.

Relationships, Sex and the Law

Age-appropriate teaching will help students understand that laws exist to protect children and young people.

Depending on age and developmental stage, students may explore:

- age of consent;
- sexual offences;
- sexual harassment;
- sharing intimate images;
- exploitation;
- grooming;
- abuse;
- consent;
- online sexual offences.

Legal information will be presented carefully and factually. Staff will avoid presenting complex legal matters as simple rules where circumstances can affect the legal position.

Where appropriate, students will be signposted to trusted professional sources for further advice.

Inclusion and SEND

The curriculum will be adapted to ensure that students with SEND can access RSE.

Adaptations may include:

- simplified language;
- visual resources;
- explicit teaching of social situations;
- additional repetition;
- scenario-based learning;
- individual or small-group sessions;
- communication aids;

- additional processing time;
- pre-teaching of vocabulary;
- structured discussions.

Students who may have difficulty recognising social cues, understanding boundaries or identifying unsafe behaviour may require additional explicit teaching.

Teaching Methodology

RSE will be taught using a range of approaches, including:

- discussion;
- scenario work;
- case studies;
- role-play where appropriate;
- videos;
- quizzes;
- anonymous question opportunities;
- individual reflection;
- group work;
- practical decision-making exercises;
- signposting to external sources of support.

Lessons will avoid requiring students to disclose personal experiences.

Teachers will use hypothetical scenarios wherever possible when discussing sensitive issues.

Safe Learning Environment

Before sensitive topics are taught, staff will establish clear ground rules.

These will include:

- respect for others;
- no personal questioning;
- no sharing another person's private information;
- no discriminatory or degrading language;
- students may indicate when they need support;
- questions should be appropriate to the learning environment;
- confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where safeguarding concerns arise.

Staff will monitor the learning environment carefully and intervene where discussions become inappropriate, discriminatory or harmful.

Safeguarding Integration

RSE is closely linked to ELKOLET's safeguarding provision.

Where teaching identifies or results in concerns relating to:

- abuse;
- exploitation;
- grooming;
- sexual violence;
- sexual harassment;
- domestic abuse;
- inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- online sexual exploitation;
- intimate-image abuse;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;

staff will follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Students will be reminded of appropriate routes for reporting concerns.

RSE will therefore contribute to the wider safeguarding culture rather than operate as an isolated curriculum subject.

Appendix 2 – Right to withdraw

Parent/Guardian/Carer, please complete the form below if you wish to withdraw your child from sex education within the curriculum.

To be completed by parent/carers		
Name of child		Date
Name of parent/guardian/carers		
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within the curriculum		

Any further information you would like ELKOLET to consider	
Parent/carer signature	

To be completed by ELKOLET	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	
Date of discussion	
Director of Education and Family Support Signature	

Appendix 2 – Government Guidance on RSE

From [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#) pg 27-30

Families

Pupils should know:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.

- what marriage is, including their legal status – for example, that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

Respectful relationships, including friendships

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships, this includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
- 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

Online and media

Pupils should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online

- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- the impact of viewing harmful content
- that specifically sexually explicit material, for example pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

Being safe

Pupils should know:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn, in all contexts, including online

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Pupils should know:

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

The Law

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)