

Relationships

Learning together about Relationships

Welcome to the unit we call **Relationships**. This unit is part of our programme of learning called Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education. When we do our RSHP education we focus on the needs of each and every learner in the classroom. We want to develop their communication, cognitive, physical and self-help and independence skills.

Learning about relationships matters because children develop connections with the people around them. First bonds are built with parents and carers, then children start to engage with others who will play a role in their lives, including peers their own age. These relationships matter to children and young people with complex additional support needs as much as they do to any child, but they will need support over their lifetime so that we can help them to connect with us, to communicate and to collaborate with others.

When it comes to making and sustaining friendships there are challenges to supporting children and young people with complex additional support needs. Opportunities to make friends can be undermined by social isolation and the level of care and support adults might provide can limit independent social experiences. However, with this in mind, it is important to remember that friendships are a part of a good childhood and we can work together to provide the best support and opportunities for children and young people to experience peer relationships that can become friendships.

In this unit of learning we will also support young people to think about romantic or loving relationships. Young people can be attracted to others, but not necessarily understand those feelings or how to navigate them. They will also observe loving relationships around them. Our learning activities will build awareness of personal feelings and understanding that when adults love each other they might live together or get married.

It is important for learners that there is a close relationship between school (or college) and home when it comes to learning about relationships. This will help make sure everyone works together to promote independence and wellbeing. While we can plan some of this learning a lot of learning also happens in what people sometimes call 'teachable moments', so in situations such as the bonds made and deepened during family events and celebrations or when we support a child or young person to engage with their peers in social situations.

With the right level of support and resources children and young people who take part in activities as part of the **Relationships** unit will learn:

- That they engage in different kinds of relationships with family and peers.
- What a friend is and how to be a friend.
- To recognise feelings (likes, affection, love and feelings of attraction).
- That when people are in love they can live together or marry. This can be with someone of the opposite or same sex.

You will find the unit about relationships here: <https://rshp.scot/complex-asn-draft/>