



Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

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Introduction

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world, and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education will take place within the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) programme, in Philosophy and Belief, which will emphasise the moral aspects of sexuality, and in Science, where students will look at the biological aspects. The teaching offered by the School should be seen as complementary and supportive to the role of parents, and should be sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content, including any SEND pupils identified.

In the Junior Department, these subjects are seen as the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. In the Senior School, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary level and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas, such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. We need to give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

The aim of our programme is to instil in our students a respect for human life and the dignity of the human person through:

- giving clear, accurate, appropriate and up-to-date information on sexual issues
- helping students to acquire skills which will enable them to make informed choices and decisions in their lives, looking clearly at their responsibilities, first to themselves and then towards others
- providing a climate that allows individuals to feel valued and affirmed, and, therefore, safe and unthreatened, enabling them to put forward and explore their ideas and feelings
- providing the opportunity for students to explore and clarify attitudes and values in their developing experience of relationships and sexuality
- raising awareness of all that undermines the dignity of self and others
- guiding students towards spiritual, mental, emotional and physical wellbeing



encouraging a respect for those who represent the diversity of human experience, culture and sexuality, and ensuring that Fundamental British Values are not undermined in any way.

- to ensure that we comply with legal requirements.

Process of Policy Development and Consultation

It is important that the whole School community is involved in the process of developing PSHCE and the provision for Relationships, Sex and Health education. This has meant, and will continue to mean, consultation with students, parents, staff and other members of our School community, and the Governors. It also means looking beyond ourselves to the wider community in which we live.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy document is:

- to give clear guidelines to all who are concerned in planning, delivering and contributing to relationships, sex and health education at LHS
- to ensure by consultation that we have provided a clearly thought-out programme which meets the needs of our students
- to make clear the roles and responsibilities that people hold
- to emphasise our whole School approach: we are all involved in developing education in sexuality in the day-to-day life at LHS
- to define the parameters in which we are to work

The Framework

This policy has been written following the guidance on good practice given in the document Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2020), the Children and Social Work Act (2017), the Equality Act (2010) and the Education Act (2002), particularly section 80A in relation to the provision of education by maintained Schools. It was also written bearing in mind the requirements of the Every Child Matters agenda. It has links with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

*Under the terms of the 1996 Education Act, parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education aspect of RSE – any requests and the decisions made will be recorded. The School will first discuss the request with parents, to clarify the reasoning behind it, and to explain the benefits of receiving this education and, in the opinion of the School, any detrimental effects withdrawal may have on the pupil. After these discussions, the School will review the parent's request to withdraw their child up to, and until, **three terms** before the pupil turns 16. At this point, the School will make arrangements for the pupil to receive sex education should the pupil want to. There is, however, no right to withdraw pupils from relationships education at primary or secondary level. Neither can parents veto curriculum content.*



Timetable for Review of this Policy

The PSHCE and Relationships, Sex and Health Education policies feed into the School Development Plan and will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Pastoral Committee, and the Governors' Education Committee and Full Board.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Evaluation

In order to ensure effective practice, and to keep up-to-date on information, it is essential that the programme for Relationships, Sex and Health Education is reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis. Careful attention will be paid to the evaluation sheets which are completed at the end of each year's programme. Staff will analyse what was well received and which topics stimulated the students to think for themselves and develop their self-awareness and critical skills. This information will be discussed by the Heads of Year/Key Stage at the end of each summer term, in order to inform and improve future teaching.

Underlying Principles of the Programme

Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values

Our sex education programme will be developmental, giving accurate and appropriate information which is inclusive and accessible to all our young people. It is taught within a framework of moral principles. In order to carry out these principles in practice, it is important that every pupil is helped to realise the importance of respecting themselves and others in their relationships both at School and outside, and the responsibility that they have both to themselves and to others in the choices and decisions that they make.

Values can be taught and can be learnt by experience and example, but they cannot be imposed. Students will be given the opportunity to discuss values and morality. This will encourage the growth of self-awareness and will enable them to develop morally and establish their own values framework.

Discussion of moral values will not take place in the abstract, but will relate to young people's experience and expectations of relationships, sexuality, and wider moral issues which will affect their lives. It is important that they realise that strong emotional feelings are experienced in sexual intimacy, and that they are aware of their responsibility in showing respect and care for their own and the other person's feelings, decisions, rights and bodies.

Students will be encouraged to consider values which demonstrate compassion and care when interacting with people whose ideas do not conform with their own.

Knowledge and Information



The Relationships, Sex and Health Education delivered should be tailored not only to the age, but also to the understanding of the pupils and should take into account their different religious backgrounds.

All children, including those who develop earlier than average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes.

Young people require sufficient knowledge and information about sexual issues to prepare them for adult life and inform their decisions. Media messages, old wives tales and rumour sometimes cause confusion over the facts, and perpetuate ignorance and bias. We encourage students to examine such sources critically.

Young people need the space in which they feel safe and able to discuss their fears and share their misunderstandings, and where they are able to challenge, question and explore what sexuality means, and how it is expressed in themselves, in others and in society.

Research has shown that effective sex education, both in School and at home, can lead to more responsible behaviour and a reduced likelihood of early sexual activity and risk of psychological and physical harm. At the start of any topic or session, it is important that teachers sensitively examine the knowledge that the students already have, which will give them a realistic starting point. Liaison with parents and the Junior Department is particularly important in helping the School establish a programme that meets real needs.

The information and knowledge content of the programme will include

the following:

- Full, accurate and up-to-date information about growth and development on topics, including puberty, sexual relationships, conception, fertility control, childcare and responsible parenthood, including the legal aspects of sexuality; positive and negative consequences of sexual practice; HIV/AIDS; unplanned pregnancy; STIs and cervical cancer; awareness of FGM
- Information about the essential elements involved in establishing and maintaining close relationships which are central to personal happiness
- Looking at what friendship and love involve in real terms
- Information which aims to educate against prejudice
- Teaching of the major world religions on sexual morality, relationships, commitment, marriage and family life

Skills



Social skills in learning about relationships cannot just be taught; they evolve on the basis of individual and shared experiences. Success in acquiring these skills depends on young people feeling valued themselves. Our first task is to try to increase their self-esteem, confidence and integrity.

In sex education, opportunities will be provided for students to:

- assess evidence
- make individual and group decisions
- learn to listen and negotiate
- look at ways of dealing with conflict and solving problems.

Independent and group work will enable students to:

- explore other people's points of view
- consider diversity, fairness and justice
- consider prejudice and discrimination.

It is hoped that developing their questioning skills and critical ability will help pupils to make informed and balanced choices and become more self-aware.

Organisation and Delivery of the Programme

RSHE on the school timetable

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is delivered through the PSHCE programme. The moral aspects of sexuality will be explored in Philosophy and Belief and PSHCE lessons. Biological aspects will be covered during Science lessons, and in PSHCE.

The overall planning, preparation of materials and much of the delivery of the programme is done by the Head of PSHCE, supported by, and in consultation with, the Heads of the Biology and Philosophy and Belief departments and members of staff with pastoral responsibility. Wider aspects regarding sexuality and relationships are integrated in all pastoral and curricular areas embracing a whole School approach.



Methodology and Approach

Staff delivering the Relationships, Sex and Health Education programme need to be aware of their own values and the impact they could have on their students.

Junior Department

Whole class discussion, stories, use of information books, videos, clubs, answering pupils' questions.

Senior School

Science: whole class discussion, videos, individual assignments.

PSHCE and Religious Studies: a variety of approaches is used including whole class and group discussion, decision-making, problem-solving, assessment of evidence, teacher-led activities, role-play and video, outside speakers and the use of GCSEpod.

Sixth Form

Discussion, outside speakers (when possible), current media including newspapers, videos and websites, independent assignments.

Resources

Resources are carefully selected from a wide range of sources and are regularly reviewed and evaluated by staff, and, where appropriate, by students. When selecting resources, care is taken to ensure that the information given is appropriate to the age of the students and relates to their experiences, as well as fitting the values and ethos of the School.

Training

Training is on-going in order to ensure good practice. It is important that teachers who are willing to be involved in sex education are given support and feel confident in what they are doing.



Sensitive Issues

The position concerning giving advice on contraception to students under 16.

The Legal Position

A teacher's pastoral concerns should never trespass on parental rights and responsibilities. As a general rule, teachers should not give contraceptive advice to an individual pupil under the age of 16. A pupil requesting advice on any aspect of sexual behaviour should be encouraged to discuss the matter with her parents and (if appropriate) a relevant health professional.

School Practice

Teachers should not give students advice on contraception pertaining to their individual personal situation, but should encourage them to speak to their parents. If students say they are unable to seek help from their parents, the member of staff concerned should, only after a careful discussion with them on the moral, physical and legal implications, inform the child about how to seek help from appropriate health professionals. Students should have the right to information about who these professional people are and where they can be found in their local areas.

Teachers are able to discuss with individual students the issues that surround the use of contraception. If the teacher is uncertain about any of the issues involved and seeks advice or support from another member of staff within the School, or a health professional outside, it is important to respect the student's confidentiality by presenting a hypothetical situation which will exclude their identity.

Answering students' questions

Ground rules for asking questions should be established at the outset in sex and relationships lessons. If teachers do not feel comfortable with questions, they should seek advice from either their Head of Year/Key Stage, or the Head of PSHCE. They should not feel obliged to answer difficult questions immediately, and to do so could be inappropriate in a class forum.

Procedures concerning Confidentiality and Disclosure

It is important that students understand the position regarding confidentiality between themselves and staff before speaking to them in confidence.

Teachers should not make promises of confidentiality to a student that cannot be kept. *It is important that young people feel confident that they are able to approach teachers for information and support on issues that may relate to their sexual behaviour. It is vital that teachers are able to respond to young people's requests for help and do*



not turn them away. It is unlikely that young people will trust teachers if they feel that this information will be passed on to their parents.

Where the circumstances are such as to lead a teacher to believe that a pupil has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place her at physical risk or in breach of the law, the teacher has a general responsibility to ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications and is urged to seek advice. In such circumstances, the teacher should inform the Headmaster or the Deputy Head. Arrangements should be made for the pupil to be counselled if appropriate and, where the pupil is under age, for the parents to be made aware, preferably by the pupil herself, with the support of the school if necessary.

If there is any disclosure which indicates that a student is at risk of, or has experienced, abuse it is essential that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Sarah Davies) is informed immediately. Teachers are made aware of the need for strict confidence, for the absolute need for disclosure to no-one but the Designated Safeguarding Lead or her Deputy DSL, or the Health & Wellbeing Officer. If necessary, they should make a disclosure straight to the appropriate external organisation.