



Lady Margaret School

Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Updated November 2021

To be reviewed Autumn 2024

INTRODUCTION

This policy on relationships and sex education (RSE) is based on the DfE document 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (September 2021). In this document RSE is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development'. The guidance states, it is about learning the value of family life, marriage, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.' It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

At Lady Margaret RSE is part of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, as well as being covered by the science curriculum at KS3 and 4. Students are informed through sex education and encouraged to ask questions with regard to morality and individual responsibility, within a safe learning environment. We do not use SRE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

We believe sex education to be an integral part of our students' personal, social and health education; The London Diocesan Board for Schools' policy on Relationships and Sex education (2009) states 'The objective of relationship and sex education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. Relationships and sex education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at school and of society and preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

It should also include 'the exploration of relationships, values, morals and Christian and other beliefs in the multi-faith context, so that increasing knowledge is gained alongside the development of communication and decision-making skills and positive attitudes to oneself and others.'

Within a church school the Christian ethos will provide the context within which all personal development takes place. This means that Christian values and attitudes with the emphasis on the importance of marriage, the family and stable relationships to build a child's self – esteem, self-awareness and a sense of moral responsibility will permeate the entire curriculum – both explicit

and “hidden.” The School will not discriminate against or stigmatise those students who are in different types of family units.

Within this context students are taught:

- The physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults
- The way humans reproduce
- Respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship
- The importance of family life
- The nature of relationships and social skills
- How the law applies to sexual relationships.
- Respect for the views of other people and cultures
- Sexual abuse, and what they should do if they are worried about sexual matters
- Sexual health and contraception
- The concept of consent in a variety of contexts (including in sexual relationships)
- To recognise the portrayal and impact of sex in the media and social media (which might include music videos, advertising and sexual images shared between young people, the unrealistic portrayal of relationships and sex in pornography)

The questions which arise naturally from students during the delivery of our sex education are answered honestly and the factual content of the course is always followed by discussion of the implications of what has been taught. Such discussions are part of the Religious Education Syllabus and an important part of the personal and moral education of our students. We try to ensure that what is taught is appropriate to the stage of development of each year group and that it in no way conflicts with the ethos of the school. Our SRE programme takes into account religion and other factors, in line with our equal opportunities statement. New colleagues are supported by more experienced colleagues and/or external agencies in delivering the SRE programme.

Defining sex and relationship education

Effective SRE provides young people with the necessary knowledge, skills and the understanding to make informed decisions about their relationships with self and others, sex, sexuality, emotions, relationships and sexual health. It involves acquiring knowledge, developing social skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. SRE can teach young people to:

- Value themselves and others, physically, emotionally and sexually
- Form positive and rewarding relationships
- Develop the confidence to assert their needs and to look after themselves both emotionally and physically.
- Make informed choices
- Be clear about the facts concerning sex (for example, contraception and sexually transmitted infections)

Sexuality

The Department for Education’s National Curriculum Guidance and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate supports the entitlement of students to objective and accurate information about sexual identity including homosexuality. We aim to protect students from innuendo and distorted sexual images

with which young people are bombarded by the media with open, balanced, accurate information. We are committed to meeting the needs of all students including those who are LGBT+ or who may have a parent or relative who is LGBT+ and to addressing homophobic and transgender bullying.

Parental right of withdrawal

Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their children from school sex education. This right does not apply to statutory curriculum elements of the programme. Where parents decide to exercise this right, they may be invited into the school to discuss their concerns and to see if their anxieties may be allayed.

Emotional literacy and self-esteem

SRE provides a major opportunity to develop emotional literacy. With a constant emphasis on developing meaningful relationships with others based on respect, the creation of quality relationships is central. This practice also aims to nurture self-esteem in the belief that higher self-esteem will allow students to make healthy and informed choices.

CURRICULUM DELIVERY

Throughout KS3 & KS4 students will begin to engage in PSHE lessons which strive to inform and teach them about:

- How to develop and maintain a variety of healthy relationships within a range of social/cultural contexts
- How to recognise and manage emotions within a range of relationships
- How to deal with risky or negative relationships
- About the concept of consent in a variety of contexts
- To respect equality and be a productive member of a diverse community
- How to identify and access appropriate advice and support

The school uses a variety of different methods and age appropriate content to contribute to this programme.

KS5 PSHE (Years 12 and 13)

During the Sixth Form external facilitators provide a full day programme, during which the timetable is suspended. Sessions covered include healthy relationships, consent, STIs and contraception and LGBT+ diversity.

Science – (Years 7 and 8)

Topics in Biology lessons include reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilisation and fertility, gestation and birth and includes the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta.

Science – (Years 9-11)

The following topics are taught

- The menstrual cycle

- Hormones
- Sexual reproduction
- Fertility and IVF (Science Triple Award only)
- Contraception

The school nurse is available in school for students to discuss sexual health issues.

The following topics are covered in the KS4 GCSE RS specification:

Human rights

Equality, including gender equality

Marriage

Sexual relationships

The family, including different types of family, bringing up children and sources of support for families/relationships

Contraception

Divorce

Abortion

Students consider the current UK Law on these issues and arguments for/against changes to those laws. They study these issues either within a Christian or Muslim framework and consider humanist views, ethical approaches and students' own views.

At KS3 in Year 8 students look at issues relating to LGBTQ+ and community as part of a unit of study on Identity and Belonging.

Methodologies

Central to their engagement is making SRE interesting, manageable and relevant to the students. A number of different methods are used to maintain interest and make young people feel safe, these may include;

- Use of photographs to initiate discussions
- Case studies
- Real-life dilemmas
- Discussion
- Videos
- Worksheets
- Textbooks

Boundaries

The setting of boundaries is very important and creating a working agreement at the start of sessions supports this. Personal information does not have to be revealed. It is acceptable to take time to respond to questions raised and to return to these in the next session. If questions cause concern, they are followed up away from the classroom, in consultation with a senior member of staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Evaluation is done at the end of each topic, through Student Voice, to assess the impact and usefulness of the lessons.

Legislation

The Learning and Skills Act (2000) states that ‘young people should learn about marriage and its importance for family life and parenting. They should also be protected from inappropriate teaching materials.’

Under the Education Act (1996) the SRE programme should include information about sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV and AIDS. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw students from SRE outside the Science curriculum.

Sex and Relationship Education Guidance

This policy has followed the DfE Sex and Relationship Guidance (2000) for policy development, Personal, Social and Health (PSHE) education guidance (2013) and the London Diocesan Board for Schools policy on relationships and sex education (2009)

Confidentiality

We inform students that we cannot keep information in confidence if we feel that the student is at risk, either from themselves or others. If we think a student is at risk Child Protection Guidelines are followed. We discuss this with the student beforehand. All students are entitled to support and sexual health advice. We tell students how to access local services and refer them to our school nurse or school counsellor if appropriate.