



# St Laurence School

## Policy on Relationships and Sex Education

### Introduction

The Governing Body is committed to the provision of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) based on the encouragement of social, emotional and moral considerations and with due regard for the value of family life. This RSE policy is based on the Department for Education Sex and Relationships Guidance (DfES 0116/2000), the updated guidance published in the Parliamentary review and proposals (October 2014) and the Coalition for Marriage guide for Schools in England and Wales (October 2013). It also takes into account the DfE policy statement: relationships education, relationships and sex education, and personal, social, health and economic education, which anticipates changes to legislation from September 2019.

RSE is a lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about relationships, feelings, sex and sexuality. RSE supports the spiritual, moral and social development of all students and the importance of family life, marriage and loving relationships to promote respect for others, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

This policy should be read alongside the following policies: Equalities, Child Protection and Curriculum.

### Aim

The aim of this policy is to communicate to staff, governors, parents and carers, visitors and students the way in which RSE is delivered at St Laurence School and to promote the values central to our mission statement:

Our mission is to develop young people with active and creative minds. Within the context of our Christian and civic foundation we aim to foster a sense of understanding and compassion for others, and the courage to act on our beliefs.

St. Laurence strives to be an outstanding school, offering a broad and challenging education to meet the needs of all students. We are committed to inspiring students to achieve the highest standards of intellectual and personal development through a stimulating and comprehensive curriculum.

Within a caring, respectful, inclusive community, we cultivate a desire to learn, take risks and accept challenges. We want our students to be resilient and adaptable, equipped with the knowledge, skills and curiosity to continue their education and become fulfilled, confident, socially responsible adults.

We care. We inspire. We succeed.

We recognise the widespread national concern about the need for high quality and effective RSE, as reflected, for example in a recent YouGov poll showing that 91% of parents believe all pupils should receive PSHE lessons to teach about the risks of sexting, as well as other issues such as contact from strangers online, and a recent Barnardo's poll of 11-15 year olds also showed that 74% believed that children would be safer if they had age appropriate classes on RSE.

### Provision

The RSE programme of study is designed by the Head of Personal Development and includes coverage by specialist Science and PSHE teachers. School based and LA training is provided for teachers and other relevant staff. The curriculum includes opportunities for students to develop the skills they need to stay safe from all forms of abuse and exploitation, "teen" pregnancy and risks to sexual health. Representatives of relevant external agencies are also involved in delivering the programme. Through RSE the school addresses:

#### Attitudes and values

Students are helped to examine their own and other people's attitudes and values, particularly related to sexual matters, and to respect the rights of others to their own opinions. RSE can help students to develop a good self-image and high self-esteem, responsibility and the ability to make informed decisions.

#### Personal and social skills

RSE encourages the acquisition of skills so that students' relationships with others may be positive, fulfilling and respectful. It helps them explore how to be themselves in terms of beliefs, culture and traditions and to respect others. It provides opportunities to develop communication skills, assertiveness within a range of different situations and recognise opportunities to develop a healthy lifestyle.

#### Knowledge and understanding

RSE provides information on puberty, personal safety, friendship and love, family life and relationships, gender issues, conception and birth processes, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, prejudice and stereotyping and sex and the law. How relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health, is an important underlying element. Teaching and learning covers how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, and how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships. The importance of online safety and dangers of activities such as "sexting" and

Approval: Community and Ethos

Review Date: November 2019 - Deferred until July 2020 to incorporate new statutory updates

online pornography are also dealt with. The school exercises sensitivity and tolerance towards the diverse background and beliefs of students and parents with regard to religion, sexuality, sexual orientation and the legalisation of same sex marriage.

Materials used in schools are prepared in accordance with the PSHE framework and the law. Care is taken to ensure that students are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and cultural and religious background of the students. The school recognises the need to begin with students' own experiences, beliefs and values and, therefore, places a high importance on creating a supportive and secure atmosphere where they can develop the confidence needed to talk, listen and think about sex and relationships. In order to do this, teachers work within the current code of conduct within Teacher Standards 2012 (DfE) which states that teachers must not undermine fundamental British values, including "mutual respect" and "tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs". During lessons teachers:

- Establish ground rules with students
- Emphasise the importance of mutual respect
- Require no open personal disclosures in a class setting
- Use distancing techniques
- Encourage reflection

National Curriculum Science Key Stage 3 introduces sex education in the second half of Year 7 addressing the biological aspects of sexual reproduction and menstruation. At Key stage 4 this understanding is extended to include an understanding of hormone control.

The PSHE curriculum Relationships education from Year 7 and RSE from Year 9 and builds an appropriate age related curriculum at Key Stage 4. The curriculum focuses on the importance of love, care and responsibilities as well as sex. The school provides students with information about different types of contraception, safe sex and how they can access local sources of further advice and treatment. Students are made aware of personal responsibility and the consequences of one's actions in relation to sexual activity and parenthood. The arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure (including peer pressure) and other risk-taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol are presented to students. The school ensures young people understand how the law applies to sexual relationships.

## **Parents**

### **Right of withdrawal**

Sex and relationships education is part of all students' education and it is hoped that all will participate. However, the school acknowledges that, under section 405 of the Education Act 1996, parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationships education programme except for that part which occurs in the National Science Curriculum. Parents wishing to withdraw their children from PSHE lessons when RSE is being considered are asked to contact the Headteacher in writing. Parents need to be aware, however, that sex and relationships education can occur at any time if it arises naturally from class discussion.

Parents and carers have an important role in RSE by instilling values, providing a framework for relationships and arranging structures for support. This RSE policy is made available to parents and an outline of RSE content is provided each year by PSHE staff.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The RSE programme of study is monitored by the Head of Personal Development and appropriate members of senior staff. The nominated RSE governor also has some responsibility for compliance with national requirements. The School carries out an annual self- evaluation of RSE based on the Wiltshire Young People's Charter for RSE.