



## **Relationship and Sex Education Policy**

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## **1. Rationale and Ethos**

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education 7 (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving Secondary Education. RSE involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity through a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Relationship and Sex education (RSE) is an integral part of our whole school Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) curriculum at Central Lancaster High School. Pupils study RSE throughout their time at Central, focussing on covering the content in a manner appropriate to their age and development.

The main aim of RSE is to equip young people with the information they need to develop healthy, constructive and nurturing relationships of all kinds, including friendships, romantic relationships and professional relationships. RSE at Central Lancaster High School will enable pupils to identify the features of a healthy relationship, as well as understand the qualities of a good friend, a good colleague and a successful and committed relationship. We aim to ensure that all young people are endowed with the knowledge of what is considered positive, acceptable behaviour within relationships. We ensure pupils have the knowledge to identify unhealthy and abusive behaviours, develop the confidence to challenge or walk away from these relationships should they encounter them, and which would be the most appropriate service to report the behaviours to.

During their time at Central Lancaster High School, pupils will also study contraception, consent, sexuality, gender, puberty, the law surrounding sex as well as the influence of pornography on young people's attitude toward sex. We believe that a positive understanding and attitude to the teaching of relationships and sex education increases pupils' sense of self-esteem and self-worth leading to a sense of empowerment as they enter, develop and uphold relationships.

RSE is taught at Central Lancaster High School through Science lessons and our personal development curriculum. Sexual matters are discussed openly, honestly and in an age-appropriate manner with the goal of properly informing pupils of the information needed to navigate the adult world as well as ensuring that they fully understand the consequences of their actions.

We recognise a real need for providing Relationship and Sex Education in a gradual and positive manner. To cater for this need, we will establish a co-ordinated programme, which has specific and regular stages that are established within the curriculum as a whole. The aim of this programme will be to help pupils make the right judgements and to take the right actions in the many and varied situations in which they may find themselves.

## **2. Individual Needs**

**SEND:** Pupils with special needs will be taught alongside their peers either in mixed ability form groups or in their curriculum groupings. Subject teachers will refer any pupil they feel is having difficulty with the basic understanding or with the social/moral aspects of sex education, to the Head of Department in the first instance who will seek the guidance of our SENDCO and create an appropriate strategy to best help the pupil.

**Gender:** At Central Lancaster High School we firmly believe that our pupils should learn about PSHE in a mixed gender setting. This is because it is vital that our pupils understand human sexuality and healthy relationships from the perspective of all genders. We believe that mixed gender settings promote a culture of open, honest discussions about RSE. We also recognise that not all pupils identify as the gender assigned at birth and may be uncomfortable in a single sex setting.

**LGBTQ+ Inclusivity:** At Central Lancaster High School, we are proud to be an LGBTQ+ inclusive school. This extends beyond the culture of acceptance for our LGBTQ+ pupils and also filters into our curriculum. Throughout their RSE curriculum, LGBTQ+ relationships are referred to and included in the learning. We choose to teach relationships and sex education in an inclusive manner and don't deliver the learning in a solely heteronormative manner. This means we cover questions that our LGBTQ+ pupils may have regarding their own sexuality as well. We also support pupils who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming to have their input into how they wish to learn about the physical aspects of RSE so as to best meet their individual needs.

## **3. The intended outcomes of our Relationships and Sex Education Policy programme are to:**

- provide clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education, be age appropriate and fully inclusive.
- enable pupils to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful.
- teach the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect.
- teach young people to understand human sexuality, to respect themselves and others and the reasons for delaying sexual activity.
- be delivered in a non-judgmental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment.
- teach the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age appropriate and inclusive way.
- recognise that, whilst there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE, the starting principles will be the application of the law and school values.
- equip pupils to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others.
- teach the rules and principles for keeping safe online and how and to whom to report issues.

- ensure pupils understand the different risks associated with various types of sexual activity and understand how to engage in safe sexual activity by exploring a range of contraception.
- develop pupils' understanding of the risks associated with pornographic material.
- develop a culture of respect for all.

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

Responsibility for this RSE policy ultimately lies with the Governing Body. In school, the implementation of this policy is led by Ms J. Lilley (Assistant Headteacher) alongside the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.

Relationship and Sex Education is taught within the framework of Life and Science lessons appropriate to the needs and maturity of the pupils in our care; it is delivered by teachers who are supported by clearly sequenced lesson outlines and regular in-house training. It is vital that RSE is delivered in partnership with parent/carers as the prime educators for children in many of these matters; the RSE curriculum will support, complement and reinforce this role. RSE is taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents, whilst always upholding the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

The views of parents are to be considered when developing a Relationship and Sex Education policy, and parents are invited to comment on the extent to which this policy reflects their wishes and the culture of the community served by the school.

The RSE programme is led by the Head of Department for RE and Life and is taught / supported by all teachers in school, in particular the teachers of Life lessons and Science. Teaching staff receive RSE training on all aspects of RSE to support pupils with understanding all parts of the RSE curriculum.

#### **5. Curriculum Design**

Relationship and Sex Education at Central Lancaster High School is incorporated into the Life curriculum and focuses on physical, moral and emotional development throughout their teen years into their adult life. Central to our RSE programme is the promotion of informative, healthy, inclusive and positive discussions surrounding relationships and sexs. It is not about the promotion or condemnation of a particular sexual orientation or sexual activities.

It has three main elements:

1. Attitudes and values:
  - respect for the dignity of every human being.
  - learning the importance of values and individual conscience and freedom.
  - understanding the features and value of healthy, positive, stable and loving friendships and romantic relationships.
  - understanding the nature of sexual diversity and promoting equality and tolerance of others who may be different to ourselves.
2. Personal and Social skills:

- reflecting on how to manage and regulate emotions successfully.
- developing self-respect as well as empathy for others.
- learning to make informed and healthy choices for oneself.
- understanding the impact and consequences of personal actions and choices on one's own life and others.
- communicating and resolving conflict in a constructive, respectful and assertive manner.
- learning how to recognise and avoid unhealthy, exploitative and abusive relationships. Knowing where and how to seek help or advice for a variety of different RSE issues.

### 3. Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding the normal physical and emotional development during the teen to early adult years.
- understanding the nature of human sexuality including puberty, reproduction, pregnancy, sexual health, emotional aspects of sexual activity and sexual relationships.
- promoting an awareness of a variety of sexualities including LGBT+ relationships understanding a range of contraceptive methods.
- knowing how to access a range of local and national health advice, contraception and support services
- reflecting on the laws and legal implications of underage or non-consensual sex.
- understanding how to effectively avoid unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.
- understanding the emotional impact of pregnancy on a young person/couple's lives.

Our RSE programme is planned and delivered through science lessons (those aspects which are part of the National Curriculum for Science) and through Life lessons. We ensure RSE is matched to the needs of our pupils by continually reviewing the curriculum based on pupil voice surveys facilitated by school and the Health Questionnaire facilitated by the school nurse.

We ensure an age appropriate RSE programme by following the guidance provided by the DfE. An overview of learning in each key stage / year group can be found on the school website (<https://www.lancasterhigh.lancs.sch.uk/our-school/curriculum/pshe>) RSE is assessed through a variety of appropriate methods including knowledge tests, ipsative assessment and pupil voice questionnaires.

## 6. Safe and Effective Practice

We will ensure a safe learning environment by ensuring that the teacher and pupils agree ground rules for conduct during RSE lessons given the sensitive nature of certain aspects of the RSE curriculum. Distancing techniques will be employed to ensure that topics covered are based on hypothetical scenarios, rather than being specific to pupils' experiences. Pupils will be made aware of mechanisms for asking questions away from the classroom setting, where

required. All staff teaching RSE will be supported by the senior leadership team and pastoral colleagues as appropriate, especially where potentially sensitive or controversial issues arise.

All staff teaching RSE are supported by regular training from the Head of Department and access to training and resources from the PSHE Association. All resources used in lessons are prepared by the Head of Department who is the expert RSE teacher in school.

## **7. Stakeholders**

Working with parents and Governor's support is integral to the success of our RSE curriculum. While we have an educational and legal obligation to provide young people with Relationships & Sex Education, we respect the primary role of the parents in educating their children about these matters. Our RSE programme is outlined in our website curriculum area and parents are very welcome to explore our RSE curriculum further by requesting to view the teaching materials.

From September 2020, the Relationships and Sex curriculum became a compulsory subject and, as a result, this limited the parental right to withdraw their child from relationships and sex lessons. According to the DfE guidance, a child may only be withdrawn from RSE topics that are **not** covered on the National Curriculum for Science. This means it is only possible for children to be withdrawn from specific sections of the programme only.

The policy and curriculum are designed with the Governors. Governors will ensure the RSE meets statutory requirements, is well led, inclusive and that pupils meet expected standards. Parents and carers are informed about the RSE policy through consultation via the school bulletin, ClassCharts and representatives on the Local Governing Body.

The policy is available to parents and carers through the school website, or a paper copy can be requested from the school office.

## **8. Right to withdraw from Sex Education**

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from sex education for aspects of sex education which are not part of the Science curriculum. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Parents/carers have the legal right to withdraw their children from all or part of Sex Education up to and until three terms before the child turns 16 (with the exception of the biological aspects included in national science curriculum).

If a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child from some or all of sex education, they can contact the Head of Department for RE and Life who will arrange to discuss their concerns either by telephone or face to face to reassure the parents of the health and educational benefits of RSE. As part of this discussion, teaching resources and plans can be shared. In most cases this resolves any concerns, but should parents still wish to withdraw their child from RSE, then a request should be made in writing to the Headteacher. All relevant staff will be

made aware when a child is withdrawn from the specific topics and a record kept on the child's personal file. Full details of the right to withdraw can be found on the DfE website.

This arrangement will be reviewed annually by the Head of Department in liaison with House Tutor and Head of Year if appropriate. When a child is three terms away from turning 16, and has the right to opt back into Sex Education if they wish, the school will discuss this with parents and the child and follow the wishes of the individual child in question.

## **9. Safeguarding**

The RSE policy supports our school's approach to safeguarding and links to and is informed by other policies and statutory and non-statutory guidance for schools, including:

- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Online Safety Policy.
- SEND Policy.

Documents which inform this RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996).
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations (2019).
- Learning and Skills Act (2000).
- Education and Inspections Act (2006).
- Equality Act (2010).
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2024).
- Children and Social Work Act (2017).
- Department for Education's statutory guidance, "Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education", 2019.

Teachers are aware that effective RSE can at times lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue and are regularly reminded of the four R's approach to safeguarding pupils. Each RSE lesson ends with a slide reminding pupils of the variety of places they can access help and support with any safeguarding issues, including those in school and out of school. Teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead where appropriate and always follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Any visitors/external agencies involved in the delivery of RSE will be made aware of, and will be required to comply with the school's protocols for visitors and safeguarding procedures.

## **10. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation**

The school's RSE provision is monitored and evaluated by the Head of Department and Senior Leadership Team through the school's Quality Assurance process. This includes reviews of the curriculum, informal monitoring of the implementation of the curriculum and book scrutiny.



The contribution of visitors and external agencies is monitored and evaluated by staff and pupil feedback. Pupil voice is influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities. This is achieved by through pupil voice activities at the end of schemes of learning and through the school's Wellbeing Council.

## **11. Policy Review**

As part of effective RSE provision, the RSE policy should be reviewed at least every two years to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents and that it is in line with current Department for Education advice and guidance. The date of publication and review date are specified on the cover page.

This policy was produced by the Assistant Headteacher for Personal Development and the Head of Department for RE and Life, through consultation with parents and the Governing Body.