



Longsands Academy Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy

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1. What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

RSE is lifelong learning about emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, gender, sexuality and sexual health. It involves acquiring knowledge, forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes and developing healthy relationships and dealing with the challenges of growing up in modern society.

2. Aims

The aim of RSE at Longsands is to provide opportunities for discussion and balanced, factually accurate information that will help prepare students for adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour;
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others;
- show respect for individual conscience and develop the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want;
- understand the importance of being mentally, emotionally and physically prepared before engaging in a sexual relationship, and the arguments for delaying sexual activity;
- avoid being exploited by or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex;
- communicate effectively by acquiring appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues;
- understand human sexuality and develop awareness of their own sexuality;
- challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity;
- understand the reasons and methods for having protected sex;
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner, from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS;
- Confidently assess risk, including pornography, sexting and staying safe online ;
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships, particularly in relation to the use of sexual images;
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary.

3. Statutory Requirements

This policy and our curriculum have been developed in response to the DfE Guidance on Relationships and Sex Education, the new statutory curriculum framework from September 2020. This policy also supports the Academies Guidance for the Delivery of RSE, Appendix 1.

4. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents were sent a working draft of the policy and asked a series of questions about it. The questions offered opportunities for their input.
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE through some focussed discussions.
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

Upon review, the policy will go through a similar process.

5. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out using our Personal Development Curriculum Map, which identifies the topics covered in each year group in each Strand of Personal Development. Other areas, such as teaching the fundamental British Values, are also relevant to our teaching in RSE.

The curriculum is constantly being reviewed with feedback being sought from staff teaching and delivering each session and taking into consideration the age, needs and feelings of students.

6. Delivery of RSE

The policy aims will be achieved through both formal and informal learning opportunities:

1. Formal Provision – to be achieved through:
 - The Personal Development (PD) curriculum, delivered by academy staff who have been supported with training and CPD, using regularly updated teaching materials and resources;
 - The planned subject curriculum, e.g. Science, Computing and IT, RE
 - Assemblies;
 - PD: Debate and Vote
2. Informal Provision – to be achieved through:
 - The values and ethos of the Academy;
 - The House System;
 - The Student Weekly Bulletin;
 - Input from the Student Services team;
 - Input from the school nurse and drop-in provision;
 - Liaison with outside agencies.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see our Personal Development Curriculum Map <https://www.astrea-longsands.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/PSCHE-Curriculum-Longsands.pdf>

We have a duty under the Equalities Act 2010, to ensure that our provision is inclusive of all pupils. We understand that a proportion of our students will not identify as heterosexual or cisgender (where their birth sex correlates to their gender identity). We understand that our provision must meet their needs and recognise that all students will learn more about healthy relationships if RSE is fully inclusive. We will also carefully consider special educational needs or disability, religion, cultural and linguistic background when planning and delivering RSE.

In relation to sexual orientation, sexuality, gender identity, religion and cultural diversity, we value the difference amongst our students and their families and, in addressing different views and beliefs, seek to promote respect and understanding. In order to ensure the RSE Curriculum meets the needs of all:

- We will teach about RSE themes relevant to all, using examples of different sexual orientations, gender identities, lifestyles and faith backgrounds.
- We will accept and celebrate difference, enabling young people to respectfully question their views and those of others.
- We will encourage respect and positive communication and discourage abuse and exploitation.
- We will not ask students to represent the views of a particular religious or cultural group, sexual orientation or gender identity to their peers, unless they choose to do so.

In relation to those with special educational needs or disability (SEND), we will ensure our RSE programme includes them. We will consider:

- their level of vulnerability
- their need to learn and demonstrate appropriate behaviour
- their need to develop self-esteem and positive body image
- the need to involve all staff, including ancillary staff and carers, in policy development, planning and training
- the management of personal care
- clarity about sources of support for students.

7. Principles and Values

The Academy seeks to uphold the guidance of the DfE. Furthermore, we believe that RSE should:

- be, bearing in mind age-appropriateness (the policy encompasses all students from Years 7-13), sex-positive, i.e. it should be open, frank, informative and should acknowledge the pleasures of sex. It should reflect that some young people are sexually active and acknowledge young people's autonomy and level of maturity. It should not focus on abstinence;
- reflect sexual diversity by discussing a range of sexual activity (not just heterosexual intercourse), as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues and relationships;

- include teaching on consent, sexting, cyberbullying, online safety, sexual exploitation and sexual coercion;
- challenge, rather than reinforce, gender stereotypes and inequalities;
- be culturally sensitive;
- be integrated into a 'whole academy' ethos and should teach life skills (e.g. planning, decision making skills), specific skills (e.g. communication, sexual negotiation skills) and promote resilience;
- provide impartial information on contraception, safer sex, pregnancy and abortion;
- be developed with input from young people.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 The LGC

The LGC will approve the RSE policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

8.2 The Principal/Assistant Principal

The Principal and Assistant Principal: Personal Development is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE.

8.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress through signposting in the sessions
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE
- Ensuring safeguarding is at the forefront of practice and concerns are logged as per the schools Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Other concerns can be raised through the appropriate channel, normally the tutor, HoY and pastoral team.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE, however the school will consider the willingness, confidence and knowledge of staff of the themes to be taught. In addition, CPD support and training is shared with staff ahead of teaching any PD session. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the PD Lead.

It is essential that RSE is carried out in a safe, non-judgmental environment where adults and young people are confident that they will be respected. Teachers should establish ground rules which include appropriate use of language, mutual respect and taking into account the views of others which are set out at the beginning of each PD session. All advice or guidance given must be non-judgemental and unbiased.

In order to reduce embarrassment and protect young peoples' privacy, we will employ teaching and learning strategies which enable pupils to discuss issues without reference to personal experience. For example, we will use fiction, case studies, role-play, videos and theatre in education to enable young people to share ideas and opinions and practise their decision-making skills in a safe learning environment.

8.4 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity in line with the Personal Development expectations set out at the beginning of every session.

9. Responsibilities for Curriculum Delivery and Policy Implementation

With regard to curriculum delivery:

- the Academy views it as the shared responsibility of all adults working within the Academy to respond appropriately to a young person's request for information and advice;
- all staff must be made aware of the guidance on responding to young people's questions and will be encouraged to access support from colleagues where necessary;
- the RSE curriculum will primarily be delivered by trained teams of teachers who have received specific CPD ahead of the session;
- the PD Lead is responsible for reviewing and evaluating RSE and is accountable to the Assistant Principal: Personal Development and Principal in this;
- staff will be assisted in their planning and delivery of the RSE Statutory Framework by the PD Lead who will, working with the Strand Leaders, provide lesson plans and activities for colleagues to deliver in the PD Sessions

10. Training

Bespoke and specific CPD will be given to all teachers who are delivering a Personal Development session ahead of the timetable event in a formal CPD session from the Strand Leader. This allows opportunity for all staff to seek extra guidance and support if needed to enable confident and consistent delivery of the curriculum.

11. Withdrawal from RSE

Whilst the Academy strongly encourages all students to participate in all aspects of RSE, we also acknowledge that parents and students do have the right to opt out of some aspects of RSE. In line with Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Parents have the right to request to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Any parent or carer who wishes to withdraw their child should in the first instance write to the

Assistant Principal: Personal Development to raise this matter.

Parents or carers who have withdrawn their child from RSE will be asked to re-confirm their decision each year.

12. Explicit Links to Other Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Confidentiality

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Assistant Principal: Personal Development and be approved by the LGC.



Appendix 1

Academy Guidance for the Delivery of RSE

RSE Resources

The Academy will create and deliver resources which:

- are consistent with the RSE Statutory Framework;
- relate to the agreed aims and objectives of this policy;
- are suitable to the age, maturity, needs, linguistic proficiency and ability of the young people;
- appeal to adults and young people;
- are up-to-date in factual content;
- are produced by a reputable organisation;
- do not show unfair bias e.g. towards a commercial product;
- avoid racial, gender and sexual stereotyping;
- encourage active and participative learning.

Working with Visitors to Support RSE in the Classroom

In our Academy we believe that RSE is most effectively taught by those who know our young people well and are aware of their needs. We encourage a diverse range of visitors to our Academy who may complement, but do not substitute for or replace, planned provision. We will work closely with visitors to ensure that the needs of our young people are met.

We will follow this Code of Practice when working with visitors:

- visitors will not be asked to work alone with students in a classroom situation;
- all visitors supporting the school in the provision of RSE will be made aware of the content and principles of this policy, prior to their visit;
- all lessons will be planned in direct liaison with the teacher or PD Lead, taking account of the ages and needs of the group and the context of the work within the PD programme;
- visitors will be reminded that, whilst contributing to planned RSE in a class teaching role, they must adhere to the same confidentiality code as staff members;
- any resources which a visitor wishes to use in the context of a lesson will be discussed and agreed with the PD Lead or a lead teacher beforehand;
- the contributions of visitors will be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure consistency of standards.

Working with Visitors in non-classroom situations

When visitors are providing a service that is not classroom based, but which contributes to the delivery of planned RSE, we will ensure that:

- those providing the service have relevant DBS checks;
- those providing the service are aware of the RSE policy and that their provision complements it;
- the service is valued and that there is commitment from the Academy;
- boundaries of different professions are respected;

- appropriate facilities (e.g. location, space, telephone) are provided;
- a named member of staff is identified for liaison with the service;
- the service/provision is actively promoted by school staff;
- procedures are in place for regular evaluation and review.

The Academy will also endeavour to ensure that:

- they are reliable;
 - they work within professional boundaries;
- the service they provide complements the RSE policy and ethos of the school;
- appropriate information is shared with the school.

Confidentiality

Within the Academy, we have a clear and explicit confidentiality policy, which is shared with staff, students and parents/carers:

- Staff are unable to offer absolute confidentiality due to the need to safeguard young people;
- we will reassure young people that staff will act in their best interests and that this may involve sharing information when the young person is at risk of harm;
- young people will be told if information is to be shared (unless the young person is very young or has significant special needs) and will be offered appropriate support.

Professionals, such as school nurses and youth workers, are bound by their professional codes of conduct when offering advice and guidance to individual pupils in an agreed and planned school-based health service, such as a “drop in centre”. Sometimes, this might involve offering a greater level of confidentiality to young people than school staff would ordinarily give.

However, in a classroom and other teaching situations when they are contributing to our planned RSE programme, they will be asked to follow the Academy’s confidentiality policy. Health professionals and youth workers will be asked to ensure that young people are aware of this when beginning work with them.

Safeguarding

With regard to Safeguarding, the Academy recognises that because effective RSE will alert young people to what is appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour, there is an increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made. *All staff are aware of the Safeguarding procedures and will report the disclosure to the designated person for Safeguarding immediately.*

Sexually Active Young People

In order to create a safe learning environment for effective RSE, we will establish ground rules and use distancing techniques to facilitate discussion. If a young person, especially one under 16, indicates to an adult that he or she is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity, we will act in the following ways:

- all young people will be urged in the first instance to talk to parents/carers or, in some cases, other trusted adults, and they will be offered guidance and support in doing this;

- we will inform young people of where they can obtain confidential support and information;
- the young person will be given clear information about where contraception and sexual health advice may be accessed;
- careful judgements will be made as to whether the sexual activity is a child protection matter.

We offer guidance for all our staff to support their decisions relating to disclosure. The guidance, overseen by the Astrea Multi-Academy Trust Safeguarding Lead, specifies criteria that would apply in deciding whether the case should or should not be referred as a Safeguarding issue and parents/carers informed.

Monitoring and Evaluating RSE

Monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy is the responsibility of the governing body (LGC). Information will be gathered from the Principal, those delivering RSE, students and parents to inform judgements about effectiveness.

Contraception Advice and Guidance

The Academy recognises that young people need accurate information about contraception and delaying sexual activity. Teaching about contraception and sexually transmitted infections is required by the Education Act 1996. The Academy will include teaching about contraception according to the RSE Entitlement Curriculum in their PD/Science/RE programmes, enabling young people to develop attitudes towards contraception and focus on the skills and knowledge needed to access it, negotiate its use and use it correctly. Lessons include consideration of a variety of possible sexual relationships and the various contraception methods that can be used within those relationships.

Sexual Orientation

The Academy will ensure that students are given unbiased non-judgemental information on sexual orientation as part of their normal curricular provision, in particular, in RE and PD. Additionally, for those young people who are struggling to come to terms with their own sexual orientation, pastoral support and independent advice will be made available to enable them to reach informed decisions.

