



## RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

### Rationale and Ethos

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, students need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Students can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risk, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. RSE and Health Education helps to support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help and to know where to access support.

This policy exists in order to provide appropriate and accessible information so that students are able to make informed decisions and are then able to express their opinions in an assertive, positive and sensitive manner without undue influence from their peers, media or society.

Hartmore School believes that learning about relationships and sexuality is a process that will occur in both the school and home setting and in both formal and informal ways. However, relationship and sex education is much too important to be left to chance and, therefore, it is part of planned, coherent and relevant health education programme. A spiral curriculum, where topics are developed and revisited as students' progress through the school. Students will be taught relationship and sex education in mixed groups unless it is felt inappropriate to do so.

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Specific issues

- Teachers may encourage individual students to seek professional health advice when appropriate. There is no legal barrier to teachers providing supportive guidance and necessary explicit information on using local sexual health services to all students either individually or as part of their education programmes. In all cases, however, the teacher has a general duty to ensure that the students are aware of moral, physical and legal implications.
- A teacher approached by students for advice should, wherever possible, encourage them to seek advice from parents/carers, and, if appropriate, from the relevant health service professional.
- Confidentiality, wherever possible teachers will forge trust with students, however, teachers are aware that at all times it is their professional responsibility to inform students that any information which *should* be passed on to others *will* be passed on and that confidentiality in such circumstances, cannot be kept. Any concerns about sexual abuse must be followed up under Safeguarding Procedures.
- Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. The Head Teacher will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.
- If a student is excused from sex education, we will ensure that the students receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. (there is not right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education)

## Programme/Curriculum design

The intended outcomes of our programme

- Provide knowledge about loving relationships, the nature of sexuality and processes of human reproduction
- Lead to the acquisition of understanding and attitudes in order to enable them to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner
- Provide a programme, which is tailored not only to the age but also the understanding of students.
- Present information in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner with awareness of the law on sexual behaviour.
- Encourage students to appreciate the value of stable family life, marriage and responsibilities of parenthood.
- Allow students to examine the physical, emotional and moral implications of behaviour and to appreciate the need for both sexes to behave responsibly regarding sexual manners – in particular a clear understanding of consent
- Develop awareness of sexual identity and to challenge sexism and prejudice in society, to encourage an acceptance of diversity and differing views.
- Encourage the development of self-esteem, social skills and strategies, which will reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse.
- Develop understanding of what constitutes a 'healthy' relationship including exploration of teen domestic violence, sexual exploitation/consent.
- Exploring the influence of technology on sexual behaviour including online pornography and sexting and sextortion, develop strategies to ensure digital safety and positive choices.
- The programme is delivered through a variety of styles and approaches to suit the topic and ability level. Whole group and small group discussion, didactic teaching, role plays, displays and student own research and information gathering from specific websites.
- Videos are used to provide information and trigger discussion. They are useful to put across a range of different viewpoints, which may not otherwise be expressed. All videos used should be viewed by teaching staff beforehand and their suitability and relevance debated.
- External agencies and visitors form a valuable part of the delivery team, complementing but never substituting for teachers. These include the Gay Helpline, Police and occasionally theatre groups (Chelsea's Choice)
- Lessons will be differentiated to ensure all students learn and understand.
- Students will be encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress

## Safe and Effective Practice

- Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings and understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a Child Protection Issue
- Teachers will consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Visitors/external agencies will be supported by a teacher at all times
- We will ensure a safe learning environment by ensuring staff are supported, that training is provided to promote confidence and they have access to good resources.
- Teachers and students will agree ground rules at the start of the programme.
- Teachers will manage sensitive or controversial issues by consultation and discussion with the PSHE Lead and/or Head Teacher

## Policy Review

This Policy was written in January 2020. It was first reviewed in October 2022 and is due to be reviewed again in September 2024.