



## Lode Heath School

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Relationships and Sex Education Policy</b>
<b>Lead</b>	<b>Mr Matt Hickman</b>
<b>Governor Committee</b>	<b>BSII Committee</b>
<b>Date Last Reviewed</b>	<b>June 2022 – (last seen by Governors, updated &amp; agreed Nov 2021)</b>
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## **Definition**

Relationship and Sex Education is teaching regarding sex, sexuality and sexual health. It concerns physical, moral and emotional development and is about understanding the importance and nature of stable and loving relationships.

## **Aims**

Through our sex education and relationships provision we aim to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life. Pupils 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 risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives and so these subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help and to know where to access support.

The Relationship and Sex Relationship education programme has the following specific aims:

- To enable our students to better understand the nature of relationships.
- To enable students to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships including marriage, for the bringing up of children.
- To provide accurate and appropriate information about the nature of sexuality, human growth, reproduction and sexual health (incorporating STIs and HIV/AIDS), as well as having a greater knowledge and understanding of different methods of contraception.
- To ensure students know how the law applies to sexual behaviour.
- To ensure students know about the sexual health support services available and how to access them.
- To lead students to consider the physical, emotional and moral implications of sexual behaviour and relationships.
- To ensure students understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay, including a consideration of the pressures they face to become sexually active.
- To empower students to manage their relationships in a morally responsible and healthy way, ensuring that students understand that in intimate relationships there is a need for mutual consent as well as considering how to negotiate consent. This includes raising awareness of such issues relating to forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- To encourage students to acknowledge that both sexes bear an equal responsibility for their actions in sexual matters.
- To empower students to understand how they can be at risk of sexual exploitation, including the concept of grooming and the awareness of predatory behaviour with particular reference to e-Safety.
- To explore the implications of modern technology on Relationship and Sex Education, particularly exploring the dangers of sexting and the sending and receiving of explicit images.
- To explore the nature of people's sexuality and challenging gender stereotypes, sexual prejudice and discrimination.
- To explore what harmful sexual behaviours look like and to develop knowledge of sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual violence.
- To help students explore issues relating to gender identity and positive body images.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The Relationship and Sex Education Programme has been designed to meet the needs of all students.

### **Organisation**

The coordinator for the Relationship and Sex Education Programme is the Director of Enrichment and Extended Curriculum, Mr. M Hickman.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr. N Burke, Deputy Headteacher.

The programme is structured to ensure that all students receive their full entitlement, regardless of option choices.

Elements of relationships and sex education are delivered through the enrichment curriculum. This includes fortnightly character and personal development lessons, curriculum in English, Science and Computing alongside workshops and performances from external agencies such as Loudmouth theatre group. The work done in the enrichment programme encourages students to view their relationships in a morally responsible and healthy manner whilst equipping them with the skills to act upon reasoned decisions.

### **Teaching Strategies**

#### **Ground Rules**

In order to create a safe environment in which neither teachers nor students feel embarrassed or anxious, ground rules are established:

- No-one will be forced to give a personal opinion in a whole class discussion;
- No one will have to answer a personal question;
- Personal comments about individuals are completely unacceptable;
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used.

#### **Distancing Techniques**

By depersonalising discussions embarrassment is avoided and students' privacy is protected. For example, role plays, case studies, videos and where possible the use of theatre in education groups are used to help students discuss sensitive issues and develop decision-making skills through a structured activity in a safe environment.

#### **Reflection**

Students are encouraged to consolidate their learning and develop new understanding, skills and attitudes by reflection.

#### **Resources**

The resources used are selected carefully and are appropriate to the needs and ages of students; those dealing with relationship issues are consistent with the value placed on stable relationships and family life.

#### **Dealing with Questions**

If a question is too personal, the teacher will remind the student of the ground rules. If the student needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as an SMBC designated school nurse or access to a counselling service.

If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question this will be acknowledged, and it will be suggested that the student or teacher, or both together, research the question later.

If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a student, is inappropriate for the whole class or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher will acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the student will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information. The teacher will then follow up with the individual student later.

NB. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse, they will follow the school's child protection procedures.

### **Specific Issues Statements**

#### **Sensitivity Regarding Home Circumstances**

The school aims to foster a recognition of the importance of stable relationships and the importance of marriage for family life. However, it is recognized that some students may come from backgrounds which do not correspond to the ideal. Teachers will employ sensitivity to avoid causing personal hurt and giving unintentional offence.

#### **Parents Right to Withdraw Their Child**

At Lode Heath School, Relationship and Sex Education is carefully structured to promote the development of the whole child. However, parents do have a statutory right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Sex Education provided, except from that which forms part of the National Curriculum in Science. They are encouraged to discuss this fully with the staff of the school before making such an important decision. A parent who does wish to exercise this right should direct their request in writing to the Associate Headteacher specifying from which parts of the Relationship and Sex Education Programme their child is to be withdrawn.

#### **Safeguarding Entitlement**

Students will not be withdrawn on an individual basis for Learning Support or intervention activities from lessons in Science, on Life Ready days or from PSHE lessons when Relationship and Sex Education is being taught.

#### **Student Absence**

Students who miss work relating to sex and relationship education will be expected to catch up this work when they return to the lessons. Students who miss work relating to Relationship and Sex Education in other areas will be provided with any materials/information issued when they return.

#### **Visiting Speakers**

When visiting speakers contribute to the sex education programme, they will be made aware of the school's sex education policy and their input will be known and agreed in advance. A teacher will remain in the room with the visitor.

#### **Confidentiality**

For matters relating to confidentiality please see the school's confidentiality policy. Specific details relating to this policy can be found in Appendix 1.

#### **Working with Parents**

The teaching offered by Lode Heath aims to be complementary and supportive to the role of parents. The school seeks to keep parents fully informed and to invite further dialogue where appropriate. The Relationship and Sex Education Policy is to be available for inspection by parents on the school website.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Student Confidentiality**

All academies are required by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to “promote the well-being of students at the school”. An effective Relationship and Sex Education programme that promotes speedy referral to confidential services can help academies to demonstrate how they promote student well-being.

All young people, including those aged under 16, are entitled to confidential sexual health and contraceptive advice/treatment. Improving access to confidential sexual health services both in academies and in the community is one of the ways in which academies help their students to stay safe and avoid health outcomes that have a negative impact on their learning.

Concerns about confidentiality and subsequent lack of trust are the main barriers that stop young people from accessing sexual health advice and treatment. Yet survey data suggests that about one third of young people have had sex by the time they are 16. These same young people are also the least likely to access contraceptive and sexual health advice services which increases the risk to their health and well-being. Although Relationship and Sex Education supports young people to delay early sexual activity, secondary academies also have a duty to promote the well-being of those students who, for whatever reason (including coercion and abuse), experience early and often unprotected sex.

All staff at Lode Heath, no matter what their role within the school, need to have a good working knowledge of the school’s Confidentiality and Safeguarding policies as well as the students themselves.

Staff in schools can never promise unconditional or absolute confidentiality. At Lode Heath therefore, in the classroom, the aim is to strike a balance between helping students to feel respected, safe and able to participate fully and openly while still protecting privacy and safeguarding welfare. Therefore, if a teacher, health professional or other classroom visitor hears or sees something to suggest a young person in the group or another young person is at risk of serious harm or of causing serious harm to others, they must share this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. However, they must gain the consent of the student prior to this.

Although it is accepted best practice in education to encourage a young person to talk to a parent/carer about any worries they may have, they cannot be made to do so against their wishes. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents of any disclosure. However, members of staff at Lode Heath are advised to refer the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead before they promote action or offer advice themselves.

Although the legal age of consent is 16, the law is not intended to be used to prosecute mutually agreed teenage sexual activity between two young people of a similar age unless this sexual activity involves abuse or exploitation. At Lode Heath, if it is established or suspected that sexual activity involves abuse or exploitation, action and reporting must be undertaken in line with the school’s Child Protection Policy. Individual members of staff are not expected to investigate possible abuse, but they do have a key role to play by referring any concerns to their DMS.

For purposes of clarification the following information needs to be adhered to by the school:

**Under 13's:** Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, a child aged 12 or under is not capable of consenting to sexual activity and penetrative sex is classified as rape. At Lode Heath if a disclosure is made of penetrative sex or other intimate sexual activity, the member of staff should refer to the DMS, who would follow the recommended procedures.

**13 – 15-Year Old's:** The legal age of consent is 16. Staff may feel that sex under 16 is too early, but the law does not wish to criminalise young people who are in a mutual sexual relationship. At Lode Heath if a disclosure is made by a 13 – 15-year-old of underage sex, it may be appropriate, although it is not a legal requirement, to assess whether there are any serious consequences for the welfare of the young person. Any cases of concern should be referred to the DMS if a case of abuse is suspected or the member of staff feels that the student is at risk or in potential danger. During these discussions it is our expectation at Lode Heath that the names of the student(s) involved are known in order to make the best judgment if and when further action is deemed necessary. The Head of Year or the DMS will then determine whether to initiate child protection procedures.

**16 – 17-Year Old's:** Although sexual activity involving this age category is unlikely to involve an offence, at Lode Heath, a discussion with the Head of Year and/or the DMS is advised and subsequent action by them may be appropriate if staff suspect serious harm or the risk of serious harm.