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Relationships and Sex Education Policy

(Draft – to Governors December 2025)

Relationship & Sex Education Policy

Approved / Accepted by	The Lowry Academy (UL Academy School) Policy in line with United Learning policy The Local Governing Board (LGB)		
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13.12.2022	Annual review – no changes	ratified	September 23
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1. Aims

The PSHE curriculum takes full account of the government's statutory guidance on relationships and sex education (RSE) and health Education. (February 2019). We aim to prepare students to take their place in society as responsible and risk aware citizens. The curriculum has been carefully sequenced taking into account age appropriateness to provide students with knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and knowledge and to develop the resilience to ask for and know when to seek support and advice.

The curriculum is designed to support students to embrace the challenges of adult life, equipping them with the 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.

The aims of relationship and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Enable young people to understand and accept themselves and others, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, culture, disability, faith or age.
- Students will be given the knowledge and skills to prevent prejudice and to challenge it where it occurs.
- Provide students with the knowledge, understanding and information of where to turn for advice.
- Provide students with factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions, drugs, alcohol

2. Statutory requirements

Under section 3.6 of the National Curriculum, RSE is compulsory from Year 7 onwards.

Secondary schools must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in Section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

If academies do teach RSE, they are required by their funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in Section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At The Lowry Academy, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy Development

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

1. Review – a member of staff 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 and any interested parties are invited to submit comments about the policy
4. Students consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

2. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

The ‘sex education’ component in our school’s RSE includes the topics of family planning, abortion, sexual intimacy and masturbation. This is the only curriculum content that parents can excuse their child from.

3. Delivery of SRE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

The curriculum has been planned to ensure accessibility for all students. Students with SEND and particularly those who may be considered more vulnerable to exploitation and bullying have been taken into consideration in the planning of individual schemes of work. The curriculum will allow students to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Students will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. More details can be found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Across all Key Stages, students will be supported with developing the following skills:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required

- Informed decision-making
- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict
- Discussion and group work

These skills are taught within the context of family life.

4. Roles and responsibilities

a. The governing body

The Governors will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Principal to account for its implementation. The School will make an annual report to the governors regarding the policy's implementation.

b. The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 7).

c. Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE
- Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal.

d. Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

5. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents' have the right to withdraw their children from the [Sex Education] components of RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Principal. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Principal will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from RSE.

6. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The PSHE Co-ordinator will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

7. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the PSHE co-ordinator through student discussions, learning walks and official interviews and work scrutiny. This will be reported termly to the Principal.

The PSHE co-ordinator will review this policy annually. The policy will also be reviewed whenever the statutory guidance/requirements relating to RSE is updated. At every review, the governing body and the Principal will approve the policy.

Relationship and sex education curriculum map

Year	Topic/theme
7	Diversity Diversity, resilience, self-esteem, bullying Health and puberty Healthy routines, influences on health, smoking/vaping, balanced diet, energy drinks, drugs, puberty, growing up: physical and mental changes, and FGM Building relationships Types of families
8	Emotional wellbeing Mental health and emotional wellbeing. Identity and relationships Gender identity, sexual orientation, consent and an introduction to contraception
9	Respectful relationships Parenthood and caring, relationships and conflict, peer pressure Healthy lifestyle Healthy lifestyle: balance, health services, drugs Intimate relationships Sex and consent online, safe sex, relationships and the media, CSE.
10	Healthy/Intimate relationships The impact of relationships, managing feelings, sexuality: coming out, pregnancy, contraception, pornography, consent and intimacy, STIs. Mental Health -Body image Addressing extremism and radicalisation Misinformation and extremism
11	Relationships and Sex Education Consent and Intimacy – Online and Offline, Preventing and Treating STIs, Fertility, Menopause, Sexual Violence and Harassment, Conflict in relationships.

By the end of secondary school students should know

Topic	Students should know
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That there are different types of committed, stable relationships ▪ How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children ▪ What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony ▪ Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into ▪ The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships ▪ The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting ▪ How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
Respectful relationship /friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship ▪ Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships ▪ How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) ▪ That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs ▪ About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help ▪ That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control ▪ What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable ▪ The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online ▪ About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online ▪ Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them ▪ What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online ▪ The impact of viewing harmful content ▪ That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners ▪ That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail ▪ How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships ▪ How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)
Intimate and sexual relationships & sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship ▪ That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing ▪ The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women ▪ That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others ▪ That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex ▪ The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available ▪ The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage ▪ That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby,

	<p>adoption, abortion and where to get further help)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing▪ About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment▪ How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour▪ How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.
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