

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Lancing College



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1. Purpose

- 1.1 As of September 2020, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. This statutory obligation extends to independent schools and is laid out in Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers (DfE, July 2025). Lancing College is committed to discharging its obligations in respect of RSE, and this Policy explains how it does so.
- 1.2 The afore-mentioned statutory guidance also makes reference to mandatory Health Education, which the College will draw upon. However, independent schools are not bound by this part of the guidance and are being instead required to deliver Health Education in accordance with Part 2 of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations, this Policy makes no mention thereof.
- 1.3 The content and application of this Policy is non-discriminatory in line with the Equality Act 2010. In addition, the College ensures that young people clearly understand what the law in the UK does and does not allow in respect of sex and relationships, as well as the wider (e.g. criminal) implications of decisions that they may make.
- 1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Anti-bullying Policy
The Aims of the College
PSHE Schemes of Work
RSE scheme of work
Safeguarding Policy
- 1.5 This policy is subject to a comprehensive annual review year (or more frequently as determined by legislation) by The Assistant Head (Safeguarding) and subject to approval by designated members of the College's Senior Management Team (the Head Master and his Deputies) and ratification by the Board-Level Safeguarding Lead, acting on behalf of the Governing Body. In line with our duty to consult parents regarding the content and delivery of Relationships and Sex Education, the draft version of the reviewed Policy is shared with parents and (through the School Council) pupils together with an invitation to comment. Depending on the results of the consultation, amendments may be made to the draft Policy by the Assistant Head, Safeguarding, and submitted to the Head Master and Governing Body Safeguarding Lead for final approval. The aim of this process is to ensure that the Policy meets the needs of pupils and parents.
- 1.6 The statutory guidance also states that this Policy should reflect the views of teachers at the College. The Policy is accordingly disseminated to all teaching staff at draft stage with an invitation to comment.
- 1.7 In between these periodic reviews, minor changes may be made to the Policy by the Assistant Head (Safeguarding) so that it reflects current practice at the College and the most current statutory guidance.

- 1.8 Under the relevant statutory guidance, “the religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching [of RSE]”. The College routinely collects this information from parents of pupils joining Lancing.

1.9 Key personnel

Mr Gary Bird (Assistant Head - Safeguarding) - oversight of PSHE/RSE across the College

Mr Alasdair Tobias – Head of PSHE (AXT@lancing.org.uk)

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Relationships and Sex Education in III Form to UVI (Y9-Y13) is defined as: giving pupils the information necessary for them to develop healthy, respectful and loving relationships (including intimate relationships) that help them to flourish, and how to identify and resist unhealthy relationships; delivering information about human sexuality, contraception and sexual health in a fact-based and non-judgemental manner that emphasises the critical importance of consent and mutual respect.

3. Aims

- 3.1 The principal aims of RSE in the College are:

1. to equip pupils with the knowledge, understanding, criticality and self-awareness necessary to form healthy and positive age-appropriate relationships;
2. to ensure that pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of human reproduction and sexual relationships, including, for older pupils, detailed knowledge of contraception and sexual health.

- 3.2 Rather than being taught as a separate subject, RSE is embedded into the framework of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) at the College. That said, we believe that RSE should be set within a wider College context in which values such as respect, fidelity, tolerance and the importance of family are promoted at every opportunity complementing and supporting the Christian aims and ethos of the College.

- 3.3 The College also recognises that parents have the key role in teaching their children about sex and relationships, and RSE at Lancing seeks to complement rather than replace this. Accordingly, the College makes available a representative sample of the resources that the school plans to use and its PSHE Schemes of Work to parents and welcomes the opportunity to engage in discussion and consultation with parents.

- 3.4 In order to create a collaborative learning partnership between the teacher and their pupils, RSE at Lancing is delivered in a fact-based, non-judgemental manner. Teachers of RSE also take care to generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion of sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment, as well as one where a range of views can, so long as they are expressed maturely and sensitively, be tolerated and respected. RSE at Lancing is complemented by- but not delivered through- the Science, GCSE Biology syllabus and III and IV Form Religious Studies.

4. Subject Content of RSE at Lancing College

- 4.1 The relevant statutory guidance obliges the College to deliver specific Relationships Education content to its pupils of secondary age.
- 4.2 As with all curriculum subjects, RSE is taught in such a way so that it is accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or a disability (SEN).
- 4.3 RSE in III Form to UVI Form (Y9-13) forms part of PSHE. Relationships and Sex Education is delivered by PSHE Tutors to House groups of ~14 pupils. Tutors teach across the entire programme. All year groups have a timetabled 35-minute session per week. External speakers are used when appropriate – all content is discussed with the Head of PSHE and Head of Safeguarding before delivery.
- 4.4 The PSHE Scheme of Work details both the topics to be covered and the mode of delivery. Sex Education may be delivered by trained senior staff or external experts as appropriate. Content-dependent, these are delivered in a combination of mixed and single sex groups encouraging discussion and understanding and seeking to minimise embarrassment amongst pupils. All pupils are made aware in advance of the key topics to be covered, so that if there are areas which cause anxiety, they are able to discuss this in advance. The school is alert to the need for particular sensitivity when covering this area of curriculum and the sensitive input of HMMs in flagging particular issues is of key importance here.
- 4.5 Additional support is offered after certain topics in PSHE lessons via follow up conversations within the house with housemasters/housemistresses. Themes are covered over a number of weeks, which allows the topics to lead onto one another from one week to the next. Tutors are also actively encouraged to speak to their tutees about topics in PSHE, and parents are encouraged to discuss topics that are covered in PSHE with their children in order to triangulate and have the pupils receive the useful messages from all angles. All of the aforementioned provide additional support for the pupils when learning about sensitive topics.
- 4.6 We acknowledge that there is a significant join of new pupils into the Sixth Form and from a number of different countries and education systems, We are therefore committed to providing opportunities within the PSHE, Sixth Form induction, the Tutorial structure and visiting speaker programme to revise and re-emphasise RSE content which was presented in the III to V Forms in an age-appropriate manner. Effective PSHE education is taught through a spiral programme, revisiting concepts and topic areas, each time extending knowledge, deepening understanding and developing skills. There is also a focus at this point on preparation for life beyond the school, for University and for independent living.
- 4.7 Assessment is carried out at the beginning and end of an RSE topic to assess initial understanding and progress made by the pupils.
- 4.8 The curriculum will be responsive to changing needs of the pupils and the College. There may be College-specific issues that arise or national issues that justify an immediate response being required in terms of RSE content being taught.
- 4.9 The aim of RSE is to give young people the information needed to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. Relationships and Sex

education provides the knowledge and encourages the acquisition of skills and attitudes which will allow pupils to manage their lives in a responsible and healthy way.

- 4.10 The Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum is delivered in line with the latest statutory guidance (effective September 2026). It provides pupils with accurate, age-appropriate knowledge and skills to develop healthy, respectful relationships, understand their rights and responsibilities, and make safe, informed decisions.

4.11 Families

Pupils learn about a range of committed, stable relationships, including marriage and civil partnerships, their legal status, rights and protections, and the responsibilities of parenting. They explore how relationships contribute to wellbeing and how families change over time. Teaching makes clear that forced marriage and marriage under 18 are illegal, and supports pupils to recognise unsafe relationships and seek help.

4.12 Respectful Relationships

Pupils develop an understanding of healthy relationships, including consent, trust, respect, communication and boundaries. They explore equality, diversity and tolerance, and are equipped to challenge stereotypes, prejudice and harmful behaviours, including misogyny. Teaching addresses power imbalances, the influence of pornography and online subcultures, and the importance of kindness, care and ethical behaviour beyond consent.

4.13 Online Safety and Awareness

Pupils are taught about their rights and responsibilities online, including managing risks related to sharing information, harmful content and online interactions. They learn about issues such as fake content, deepfakes, AI, scams and exploitation. Teaching includes the legal and personal consequences of sharing indecent images, and how to report concerns. Pupils also develop an understanding of how data is used and how online environments can influence attitudes and behaviours.

4.14 Being Safe

Pupils learn how to recognise, communicate and respect consent and boundaries, and how to identify and respond to pressure in relationships. They are taught about safeguarding issues including sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic abuse, exploitation, grooming and harmful practices such as FGM. The curriculum emphasises personal safety, recognising risk (including in seemingly safe situations), and accessing support without blame.

4.15 Intimate and Sexual Relationships

Pupils are provided with factual, balanced information about intimate and sexual relationships, including the law in the UK on consent and the age of consent. They learn about the impact of relationship choices on physical, emotional and sexual health, including contraception, STIs and pregnancy options. Pupils are supported to make informed choices, challenge misinformation and access appropriate, confidential health services.

4.16 Teaching About the Law

The curriculum ensures that pupils are taught relevant UK laws in a factual and age-appropriate way so they understand their rights and responsibilities. This includes laws relating to marriage and civil partnership, consent, sexual offences, domestic abuse, exploitation, online safety (including image sharing, grooming and sextortion), pornography, abortion, substance misuse, extremism, and criminal behaviour. Pupils also learn about the age of criminal responsibility, medical consent, and key legal protections. Pupils will be taught that the law may differ in countries outside of the UK and that pupils should ensure that they are aware of local laws when travelling or residing abroad.

4.17 Equality

The curriculum is delivered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Pupils are taught about the importance of equality, respect and dignity, and develop an understanding of protected characteristics, including age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, and others. Teaching promotes inclusion, challenges discrimination and prejudice, and ensures that all pupils feel respected and valued.

4.18 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Content

Teaching includes age-appropriate content on sexual orientation and gender reassignment, ensuring that pupils understand the importance of respect and inclusion. Pupils learn about different types of relationships, including same-sex relationships, which are integrated throughout the curriculum.

The curriculum presents factual information about the law in the UK relating to biological sex and gender reassignment, including the legal protections afforded to individuals. Teaching is delivered in a balanced and respectful manner, recognising that there may be differing views, and does not promote any particular perspective as fact. Pupils are encouraged to express their views respectfully, and all forms of bullying or discrimination are challenged.

4.19 Addressing Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

The curriculum forms part of a whole-school approach to promoting respectful behaviour and preventing harmful conduct. Pupils are taught that sexual harassment and sexual violence are always unacceptable and that anyone can be affected. Teaching challenges sexism, misogyny and harmful stereotypes, and promotes positive, respectful relationships. Pupils are supported to understand ethical behaviour, develop respectful communication, and challenge harmful attitudes in a safe and inclusive environment.

4.20 The full content of topics to be taught under statutory guidance can be found in the *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* government guidance.

5. **How RSE is Monitored and Evaluated**

5.1 RSE is monitored by the Assistant Head (Safeguarding) and the Head of PSHE through the provision of detailed schemes of work; close working with and assessment of visiting

speakers, and evaluated through seeking formal as well as informal feedback from pupils, staff and parents.

- 5.2 Pupils will be surveyed at regular points in relation to content taught and their feedback may be used to inform future content and teaching.
- 5.3 RSE is delivered within the school's safeguarding framework. As lessons may cover sensitive topics, pupils may disclose concerns about their safety or wellbeing. Staff are trained to respond appropriately in line with KCSIE and the college's child protection policy.
- 5.4 Any concerns are acted on immediately and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Pupils are informed how to report concerns and access support. Confidentiality is managed appropriately, and pupils understand that disclosures cannot be kept secret where there is a risk of harm. Safeguarding procedures are agreed in advance with any external providers.

6. Working with Parents

- 6.1 The College consults parents regarding this Policy (see Policy Statement above) as well as taking into consideration the religious backgrounds of pupils. The College appreciates that sex education can be a contentious issue for some and that parents may be concerned about what their child may or may not be taught.
- 6.2 The College aims to be transparent about what it does and does not teach to pupils at various ages, together with the reasons why. An overview RSE Scheme of Work is available to all parents detailing the content taught across year groups. All material used to teach RSE will be made available to parents on request. A representative sample of the resources that the school plans to use will be available to parents, enabling parents to continue conversations started in class. This affords the opportunity to offer parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in the College. The Head of PSHE welcomes the opportunity to discuss and answer any parental questions. He can be contacted via email on AXT@lancing.org.uk
- 6.3 Content from External speakers will be made available upon request. When such documents are made available to parents, the school will acknowledge the provider's authorship. The school will request that parents agree to as a condition of access, that the content should not be copied or shared further except as authorised under copyright law. Where relevant and possible, the school will have IT systems place to prevent downloading this content.
- 6.4 Through the PSHE for Parents programme, the College enables parents to access particular speakers, to share in this way the material being delivered to their children and to discuss with the senior staff material being delivered and their role alongside the school in guiding their children in this important developmental area of their education and their life. This programme is delivered via both face to face and online sessions and is open to all parents at the College and those with children in Years 7 and above at our Prep Schools.

7. Working with Pupils

- 7.1 The College regularly consults pupils regarding this Policy and the teaching of RSE.
- 7.2 Pupil consultation takes the form of each pupil being consulted about potential changes to the Policy, an annual item on the Year Council meeting agenda, promotion by HMMs

of participation in consultation, via the annual Lancing Questionnaire, through discussion with the Diversity and Inclusion representatives and with Peer Supporters. In lesson feedback, RSE and PSHE assessment seeks pupils' views on content they regard as needing inclusion, and in their Transition to VI Form programme the views of all in the V Form are sought annually.

8. External Providers

- 8.1 The College works with a range of external speakers and organisations who bring a level of expertise in a particular issue or topic that a teacher may not have. We also make use of the recommendations and expertise of the PSHE Association.
- 8.2 ItHappens, The RAP Project, Chris Hemmings, Laura Bates, Natasha Devon, Alicia Drummond and Karl Hopwood are organisations or speakers with whom we have developed strong and trusting relationships over recent of years.
- 8.3 Discussion takes place in advance of talks between the visiting speaker and the Head of PSHE to ensure the message and content is age-appropriate and complements the values of Lancing College. During these pre-talk discussions and slide checks, we discuss the pastoral needs, safeguarding concerns and child-protection issues with each cohort. The Head of PSHE ensures that their invitation to address pupils has been made with clear regard to safeguarding and Prevent Duty considerations and after appropriate checks have been made.
- 8.4 It happens engages with pupils in advance of talks through a survey questionnaire. This enables them to develop a bespoke session to meet the needs of the College community. They use Survey Monkey & offer Mentimeter interactivity and/or anonymous questions throughout their bespoke talk with the pupils and parents. The results of the survey and other contributions are shared with the College.

9. Staff training

- 9.1 Teachers of RSE will be trained by an external provider on an annual basis in how to deliver sensitive topics to different year groups. The training will enable staff to confidently deliver the content of RSE as well as how to handle sensitive discussions within the classroom and how to follow up on any concerns expressed by pupils or observed by the teacher during a lesson. Some of the more sensitive topics within the RSE course will be delivered by external experts.
- 9.2 Teachers of RSE can seek further guidance and support from the Head of PSHE (AXT) and Assistant Head (safeguarding) as and when needed.

10. Right to be Excused from Sex Education (commonly referred to as the Right to Withdraw)

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education (but not relationships education, which is compulsory for all children in all schools). Parents who wish to withdraw their child are asked to put their request in writing to the Senior Deputy Head (EKH@lancing.org.uk). She will then typically invite the parents (and, if appropriate, the child) to meet with her to endeavour to assuage their concerns, discuss the benefits of sex education, and any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child, and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate. However, the College

ultimately respects the right of parents, other than in exceptional circumstances¹, to determine whether or not their child participates in sex education. If a pupil is withdrawn, the College maintains its responsibility to provide them with appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

- 10.1 The statutory guidance states that the right to withdraw elapses three terms before the child turns 16. Accordingly, if, at that point, the child freely elects to receive sex education, the College will make arrangements for the child to receive sex education before he/she turns 16.

Author:	Richard Dolan, Designated Safeguarding Lead	June 2021
Annual review:	Emma-Kate Henry (Senior Deputy Head), Gary Bird (DSL) and Alasdair Tobias (Head of PSHE)	June 2026
Next scheduled review:		June 2027

¹ which may or may not include the pupil having a special education need or disability