RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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OUR VISION

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Loreto schools and colleges in England are centred in God, rooted in Christ and animated by the spirit of Mary Ward, the founder of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our vision is that they will be educational communities where each person has the experience of being loved and valued as a sacred individual created by a loving God, communities where students enjoy an enriching and liberating education that helps them grow into the fullness of life and empowers them to be people of courage who are alive to the needs of humanity and committed to making a better world.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

I am the Way

The Truth

And

The Life

(John 14:6)

At Loreto Grammar School Altrincham, students, staff, parents and Governors form a Catholic community. We aspire to create a caring, structured environment in which teaching and learning and the experience of school

- are characterised by joyful and loving service to others
- challenge each of us to realise our full potential in a spirit of joy and creativity
- encourage the pursuit of excellence
- uphold honesty, justice and mutual respect
- enable us to be questioning, independent learners and "seekers of truth"
- prepare each of us to meet with confidence the challenges of a changing world
- improve and enrich the life of the wider community and enable us to be an example of Christian values in the world as witnesses to God's Living Kingdom

Our values are centred in God, rooted in gospel values and derive from the vision of Mary Ward.

Love and speak the truth – at all times

(Mary Ward)

1 RATIONALE

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) encompasses learning on a range of topics including:

- Healthy relationships
- Sexual health and wellbeing
- Personal identity and diversity
- Safety and emotional resilience

In order to provide children and young people with a 'positive and prudent sexual education' compatible with their physical and psychological maturity, effective RSE in Catholic schools is designed around three cornerstone principles, namely that:

- Students need clear, accurate and sound knowledge
- Church teachings are presented in a clear manner, using specific references provided by the Church
- In presentation of both knowledge and Church teachings, age appropriateness and the awareness of young person's development is key. Instruction should match the young person's developmental level and, as with all learning, be aware of individual differences.

RSE is most effective when delivered in partnership with parents and carers, complementing support provided at home.

2 AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

Our Mission as a Catholic school is to provide the highest possible standards of education for all our students, recognising the value and uniqueness of everyone, delivered in the context of Gospel values and the teachings of the Church. We aim to provide a safe place, where all students are nurtured to become capable, independent learners and tolerant, kind, thoughtful and responsible young people, who realise that with Faith, all things are possible.

'Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God'

Micah 6:8

3 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Relationships and Sex Education is statutory for all students from Year 7 onwards under section 3.6 of the National Curriculum.

Loreto Grammar School provides RSE to all students in compliance with:

- section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- section 403 of the Education Act 1996
- DfE Statutory Guidance 2025 Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK

We ensure that our provision aligns with guidance from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, including:

- *Life to the Full* programme (Ten:Ten Resources)
- *Catholic Social Teaching* (CST) principles

4 POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy is developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involves the following steps

a. Review – A working group led by the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) reviews relevant information and guidance.
b. Staff consultation – all staff are given the opportunity to review the policy and make recommendations.
c. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and other interested parties are invited to view the policy.
d. Student consultation – information from pupil voice relating to RSE is taken into consideration and implemented
e. Ratification – once amendments are made, this policy is shared with governors and ratified.

5 DEFINITION OF RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

RSE is delivered in a Catholic context, fostering moral development, respect for human dignity, and the integration of faith-based values. RSE encompasses 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. Teaching of the law and legal implications of different relationships is also communicated to pupils, balanced alongside the social, moral, and religious implications.

The RSE lead liaises with the Religious Education department and Science department as well as other curriculum areas within the school to ensure values are cross-departmental.

RSE is not about promoting sexual activity but equipping pupils with the knowledge and skills to make informed, responsible decisions about their relationships and wellbeing.

6 CURRICULUM AND DELIVERY OF RSE

RSE is delivered primarily through PSCHE lessons as well as in assemblies, in form time and within the Science and Religious Education curriculum. The Key Stage 5 form periods and Aletheia programmes have a number of age appropriate RSE foci. We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students.

In PSCHE lessons, RSE is delivered using the 'Life to the Full' programme from Ten:Ten Resources, a faith-based, age-appropriate resource. This programme is nationally recognised and used across Catholic schools in England and Wales. This curriculum is fully compliant with the guidance of our Diocese ensuring that all teaching reflects Catholic Values while meeting statutory requirements.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of young people based on their home circumstances. Families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, and foster parents/carers amongst other structures. It is important to remember that some young people may have a different structure of support around them, for example, looked after children or young carers.

Students receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE (topics such as forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with the promotion of Catholic teaching.

Across the curriculum, there will be specific classes on various aspects of sex education in which questions will arise; in these classes teachers are asked to answer honestly, taking care to make answers simple and straightforward and be careful not to give rise to confusion or anxiety. Students are encouraged to refer to their parents for further information, and should it be thought necessary by the Senior Leadership Team, parents and/or carers may be consulted. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner and, where required, seek guidance from the SLT. We therefore ensure that our students are fully informed and know where to go for further support and guidance if required, as per our safeguarding procedures.

We will ensure that students have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Board

- The Governing Board will approve the RSE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from components of RSE (see section 8).

PSCHE Coordinator

- The PSCHE Coordinator is responsible for putting the curriculum in place, for monitoring the standards of student work and the quality of teaching. Concerning the delivery of the RSE elements, this will be done in coordination with the Head of RE and the Head of Science.
- The PSHCE Co-ordinator supports colleagues by giving them information about current developments in the subject and by providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.
- The PSCHE Co-ordinator is also responsible for reporting to the Headteacher, evaluating strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicating areas for further improvement.

Staff

RSE is taught by trained staff who know our students best. They use approved Catholic resources to ensure lessons are appropriate, engaging and in line with Church teaching

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 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 Headteacher.
- Staff delivering aspects of the RSE curriculum are PSHCE teachers, Form Tutors, RE teachers (in RE) and Science teachers (in Science)

Students

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

8 WORKING WITH PARENTS

We believe that parents are the first educators of their children in faith and relationships.

- Parents are informed in advance about the content of RSHE lessons.
- Letters and resources are shared to support home discussions.
- Parents can contact the school with any questions or to request a meeting regarding RSE.
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the young person turns 16. After this point, if the young person wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.
- Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher.
- A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record.
- The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

9 TRAINING AND CPD

- Staff are trained on the delivery of our Catholic approved PSHE programme and staff from RE, Computing and Science have bespoke training on RSE as part of their induction.

- Where appropriate it will also be included in our continued professional development. Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as our school nurse, to provide support and /or training to staff teaching RSE if applicable.

10 QUALITY ASSURANCE, MONITORING AND EVALUATING

The RSE programme is monitored by PSCHE Lead and the Senior Leadership Team through:

- Learning walks in curriculum areas
- Lesson observations
- Pupil feedback
- Curriculum review

Evaluation focuses on teaching quality, pupil engagement, and impact on understanding and wellbeing. Any feedback will be considered and acted upon to ensure that the RSE curriculum is achieving its objectives.

11 LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This RSE policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Teaching and Learning Policy

- Safeguarding Policy