



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

THIS POLICY HAS REGARD TO:

- The ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements (September 2020)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)
- Sex and Relationship education guidance (2020)

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

At VLC our belief is that ‘The Whole person is the Whole point.’ As a result we aim to engage our students in a broad and rigorous learning experience: offering open and safe spaces for students to consider and reflect on their values around relationships as well as developing the attributes necessary for them to be able to navigate an ever-changing world in an assertive and compassionate way.

By the time our students leave us, our aim is that they will have developed the dispositions necessary to become empowered and autonomous citizens: a persistently reflective habit, the disposition to think creatively and critically, resilience and resourcefulness in the face of challenge and failure, confidence with collaboration and with stepping out into the intellectual unknown.

PSHE, and the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) within that, are vital components of this and this is reflected in the fact that all students have weekly PSHE sessions throughout their time at VLC.

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. All young people today are growing up in an increasingly complex world and live their lives both on and off line. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. Our aim is to ensure that in this environment young people have the knowledge skills and attributes needed to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

We also believe that mental wellbeing is central to a young person’s success and will enable them to build positive relationships. We know that young people are increasingly experiencing

challenges, and that they are at particular risk of feeling isolated. We take a Protective Behaviours approach to our teaching and ascribe to the 2 themes:

1. We all have the right to feel safe all the time
2. We can all talk with someone about anything even if it feels awful or small.

The RSE curriculum will give our students the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and seek support if problems arise. RSE is taught in the wider context of helping to foster students' wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to young people being happy, successful and productive members of society. We promote positive personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty.

The aims of Relationship and Sex Education at VLC are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Support students' understanding of 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
- Promote inclusivity by an awareness and acknowledgement of diversity
- Allow students to make informed decisions about sex and relationships and contextualise these within the digital age

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

At VLC we teach Relationship and Sex Education as set out in this policy.

This forms part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) curriculum, also known as the Floreat programme, and is in line with the government recommendations in the Relationship and Sex Education Guidance (Sept 2020) and a consultation period with students, governors and the parents of our student's form part of the process of development of this policy. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all students.

RATIONALE AND ETHOS

Relationship and Sex Education involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. Relationship and Sex Education does not promote sexual activity either directly or indirectly.

Relationships and Sex Education has become compulsory in 2020 in all secondary schools.

DELIVERY OF RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)

RSE is taught within the PSHE curriculum.

Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum.

PSHE sessions, which will include RSE, are delivered weekly by tutors or internal specialists, as outlined in the scheme of work. In addition, there are some presentations from specialist external speakers, who deliver content in line with the curriculum.

Across all year groups, students will be supported with developing the following skills:

- Communication, including how to develop and manage changing relationships and emotions
- Understanding of human sexuality, including self-esteem and the need for consent
- Recognising and assessing potential risks, to include grooming, radicalisation, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
- Understanding the impacts of watching pornography
- Knowledge of the law Informed decision-making, including faith perspectives
- Self-respect, empathy and equality for others, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues and the law
- When to seek help and support when required and where to go to do so

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body will approve the RSE policy and hold the Head Teacher to account for its implementation. The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students.

Tutors are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way, ensuring it is inclusive and age-appropriate
- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring discussions and progress
- Answering students' questions in an age-appropriate manner
- Passing on any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils, including special educational needs and disability (SEND) students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from sex education

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 Head Teacher.

The Lead of PSHE is responsible for:

- Compilation of whole school scheme of work

- Provision of age-appropriate and inclusive RSE resources
- Support of tutors delivering RSE
- Monitoring of RSE delivery

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

The PSHE teaching we offer will be complementary and supportive to the role of parents. We will consult with them on the development of PSHE subject content and policy. However, the DfE state that 'what is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the school and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content'. PSHE materials will also be available for parents on the school website.

Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from Relationships Education. However, parents will be able to withdraw their child from some or all of Sex Education (other than the Sex Education which sits in the National Curriculum as part of Science) up to and until three terms before they turn 16. Parents must apply in writing to the Head Teacher if this is the case. The Head Teacher will discuss such requests with parents and, as appropriate, with the student to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. However, a child will have a right to opt into Sex Education from their 15th birthday (specifically three academic terms before they turn 16).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

RSE sessions are quality assured by SLT and the PSHE Coordinator via drop ins, student voice and assessing the students work. Sessions delivered by external agencies during sessions are monitored by teaching staff who feedback to the PSHE Coordinator via staff questionnaire. Teaching staff monitor student progress during PSHE sessions and by looking through student's work. PSHE staff and student surveys are completed annually, the findings of which are used to improve provision. The PSHE Coordinator also completes a self-evaluation (SEF) annually and uses this to identify priorities for improvement. This policy will also be reviewed and approved annually by the Principal and the Governing Body to ensure it continues to meet the needs of students, staff and parents