



**Longcause Community
Special School**

Relationships and Education, and Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Signature of Head:	Anne Hutchinson
Date:	22.05.24
Signature of Chair of Governors:	Fred Jenkins
Date:	22.05.24
Agreed by the Governing body on:	22.05.24
Minute Reference:	81

Reviewed by:	Amanda Hulme
Review date:	May 2024
Checked by:	Anne Hutchinson
Master file location:	Admin Shared Drive
Next review date:	May 2026

Rationale

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. Health Education is also compulsory in all schools. As a result of this Longcause School has created our own unique RSHE curriculum which we name our 'Learning for Life Curriculum' (LLfL). Relationships, Sex and Health Education is taught as part of the whole school 'LLfL' programme. Our Longcause Learning for Life Curriculum (LLfL) has been developed specifically for our pupils and includes all aspects of RSE, Health Education, Life Skills and Social Communication (please see LLfL Curriculum Intent Statement for further information). At Longcause we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Issues Considered

- Statutory Legal Requirements, Sex Education and the Law
- The Childrens' Act – relating to child's right to confidentiality
- Pupils' needs – including those with physical difficulties and complex needs, particularly those with ASC and Attachment Trauma.
- Parents' wishes have been sought individually and collectively through questionnaires and consultation meetings. Individual concerns are attended to as necessary through consultation and referral to relevant agencies/support groups.
- Sex Education will be timed to be delivered early if appropriate for pupils– ie before puberty, before feelings of sexual attraction begin and before young people develop sexual relationships, this will only be when appropriate developmentally for pupils.
- Relationships, Sex & Health Education will offer a positive and open view of relationships, sex and sexuality and support sexual self-acceptance.
- RSE will empower pupils and allow them to be involved in making decisions as to the content of some RSE lessons, by asking their views prior to the topic and taking their thoughts on what they'd like to learn into consideration when planning.
- The differing physical, intellectual and emotional rates of development are acknowledged and individual needs will be addressed as pertinent.

Specific Issues Statements

- Confidentiality: it is agreed that staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality on all sex education issues and that pupils will need to understand that a confidence would not be broken without the pupil being first informed.

- Any child protection issues would need to be recorded and referred to the Designated lead or one of the deputy CP leads. The Child Protection procedures are based on the principle that the interests and welfare of the child are of paramount importance.
- Where a staff member learns from a pupil under 16 years of age that they are having or contemplating having sexual intercourse he/she should, wherever possible, persuade the pupil to talk to a parent/carer. Child Protection issues must be addressed and relevant health agencies/support services brought in to give guidance.
- Health professionals are bound by their own codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality, in a one-to-one situation outside of the classroom.

Relationships Education- Primary

Relationships Education for Primary aged pupils will focus on putting in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. Some of these skills will be taught and delivered through Computing and Positive Relationships. Primary pupils will learn about what family means and who are the people who can support them. Through Relationships Education in Primary, pupils will be taught the knowledge they need to recognise and report abuse. This will be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, and teaching pupils that they have rights over their own bodies.

Aims:

- How to teach pupils to keep themselves safe, including from others.
- Know the names for the external private parts of their body (penis, testicles, vulva, breasts).
- Know that their body belongs to them and that consent should be given/ sought before someone is touched.
- To know types of personal touch that are unsafe.
- Know the difference between public and private.
- Know how to seek support and report concerns.
- Know characteristics of healthy family life and are able to identify those that are not healthy in families.
- Know that others' families, either in school or the wider world, sometimes look different from their family.

Relationships and Sex Education- Secondary

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. RSE involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, personal identity, diversity and healthy lifestyles. The impact of this is that our pupils will be more knowledgeable about how to keep themselves healthy and safe, and understand more fully the rights that they have over their own body in regards to consent, being able to make safer and more informed decisions in later life.

In Secondary, pupils will continue to embed skills taught within the Primary stage and will move onto skills taught in the 'Secondary curriculum' only at the point at which they are ready, this will not be defined by their age. Class teachers will have a professional joint discussion with members of the leadership team, taking into account the wider knowledge of the pupil. In some circumstances, this may involve the family, who may see a range of behaviours not observed in school due to the nature of the subject.

The joint discussions will consider issues such as:

- If pupils' bodies are developmentally at this stage, or just prior to the onset.
- If pupils have the cognition to be able to understand the content.
- If teaching of specific key skills may contribute to an increase in behaviours resulting from the content.
- If there are prior concerns surrounding the pupil that may be exacerbated by the teaching of certain skills.

Where this is the case, pupils will continue to be taught skills from the Primary Relationships Education curriculum.

In the next stage, Relationships and Sex Education, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of families, including marriage, as well as introducing knowledge about romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils will be taught facts about the law, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age appropriate way. We wish for our pupils to understand the importance of equality and respect, complying with the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are among the protected characteristics. Diversity and respect, including LGBT, will be woven through skills taught within the Secondary curriculum.

Aims, in addition to those taught within Relationships Education:

- Know the law relating to consent
- How people actively communicate and recognise consent from others
- Know safe and unsafe behaviour in sexual relationships
- To provide information on relationships and changing interactions between different kinds of people, including stable partnerships and marriage.
- To know the associated risks of sexual activity and how to manage it safely, including contraception, sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy.
- To nurture a responsible attitude towards personal relationships including aspects of mutual respect and care.
- To know what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence
- To know that everyone should be treated with respect
- To know what sexual orientation and gender identify are, and that they are different

Health Education- Primary

The aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness (RSE and Health Education, DFE, 2019). In accordance with the National Curriculum for science, pupils will be taught the main external parts of the body, that the human body grows from birth to old age, including some aspects of puberty. Puberty, including menstruation, will be taught in Health education and, as far as possible, will be taught before the onset. This is to ensure that pupils are prepared for the changes that are to happen to their bodies, as changes can be alarming to pupils if they are not prepared.

Aims:

- To promote an understanding about mental well-being, and how we can improve our mental health.
- To inform them on matters of developmental changes
- To know steps that they can take to promote good physical health- including diet, exercise, dental health, sun safety, personal hygiene and germs.
- To know key facts about managing their health when they are unwell, including medicines and medicine safety.
- How to make a call to the emergency services if necessary

Health Education- Secondary

In Secondary, pupils will continue to embed skills taught within the Primary stage and will move onto skills taught in the 'Secondary curriculum' only at the point at which they are ready, this will not be defined by their age. Where this is not the case, pupils will continue to be taught skills from the Primary Relationships Education curriculum. Concepts taught regarding 'changing bodies' will be taught at a point that is appropriate for each individual learner. This will be linked to both their developmental and cognitive needs. Within the Secondary curriculum, pupils will be taught about further changes that happen to their bodies during puberty, including emotional changes and managing their personal hygiene. Due to the vulnerability of our cohort of pupils, pupils will continue to learn about public and private behaviour in relation to the changes that happen to their bodies during puberty. Pupils will be taught about masturbation at a suitable and timely manner in order to safeguard themselves. In accordance with the National Curriculum for science, pupils will be taught; the structure of male and female reproductive systems, the menstrual cycle, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/ AIDS.

Aims, in addition to Primary Health Education:

- To inform on matters of developmental changes (physical, emotional and social) and the human reproductive process.
- Personal hygiene, its practice and related health issues.

- That masturbation is a private act and key rules for how this should be done (to be addressed individually for pupils as identified as suitable).
- Basic treatment for common injuries and some lifesaving skills.
- Knows the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and their associated risks

How RSE will be taught

RSE is taught throughout our LLfL curriculum, specifically within Keeping Myself Safe, Me and My Relationships, and Changing Bodies. Biological aspects are taught within Changing Bodies.

The LLfL subject lead will be responsible for creating schemes of work for RSE as part of the LLfL Curriculum (please refer to LLfL Curriculum Intent Statement).

The methods used to teach RSE will be clear, engaging and appropriate for the age and abilities of the pupils. Explanations and materials may need to be explicit and visual in order to meet the individual needs of some pupils. All resources used will be specially designed for teaching RSE and meeting the needs of the class. Techniques will be used to ensure that pupils do not need to answer personal questions in a group.

Pupils will be arranged in groups for RSE in a way that will reflect their individual needs and abilities as well as physical maturation.

On occasion, Longcause school may offer a pupil individual RSE sessions to address a specific RSE issue.

We are very aware of the specific needs of our girls at Longcause with them being a minority in a larger population of boys.

Class teachers, along with the LLfL subject lead and ELT will consider the suitability of key topics prior to teaching them with individual/ groups of pupils. Knowledge of the pupils will be used, considering their wider needs and behaviours and therefore reasonable adjustments will be made. These topics will be marked clearly on long term plans and schemes of work, with the LLfL lead responsible for clear communication to teachers prior to teaching.

These topics include-

- The correct names for the male and female external body parts (penis, testicles, vulva, penis). This is a crucial safeguarding skill in order for pupils to have the knowledge to report abuse.
- Masturbation- Pupils will learn about masturbation and key rules to safeguard themselves and others where this is identified as appropriate. This may be identified through behaviours observed in school and/ or through liaison with families about the support that they would in regards to puberty. Carefully consideration will be made as to how groups will be taught, in relation to small groups, individual teaching and single gender groups.
- Wet dreams

- Menstruation
- Gender Identify and Sexual Orientation- Though we recognise that an understanding and acceptance of diversity is important, we understand that for some pupils learning about these skills can have a significantly detrimental impact on their emotional regulation and engagement. Therefore, teachers and leaders will use their knowledge of pupils and make adjustments to the curriculum in identifying to what extent these skills are taught.

Primary-age pupils may ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education. Similarly, Secondary aged pupils may ask further questions which go beyond that which is being taught to them. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information; with this in mind, staff will always try to answer a pupils question with factually correct information. If a staff member feels that a pupil is asking something that is developmentally inappropriate, they may wish to seek advice before answering. In this case the child will be informed that they will get an explanation.

It is important that all pupils feel safe to ask questions and no pupil will be made to feel embarrassed by any member of staff at anything they do ask.

Resources

The SRE programme will be supported with appropriate, resources that are free from stereotypes. (i.e. disability, sexuality, ethnicity, religious and/or gender stereotypes.) Some resources may contain explicit material in order to ensure clear understanding and all resources used will be specially designed for teaching RSE. Care will be taken over the appropriateness of materials and the context in which they are used.

Working with Families

All families can have access to the RSE Policy, the RSE Curriculum (within LLFL) and teaching materials. Families have been offered the opportunity to gain further information through family consultation and will be given further information about what their child will be learning prior to the topic starting, including example materials. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or some of the Sex Education lessons that fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum science lessons. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships Education or Health Education lessons. Parents do not have to give their reasons for withdrawing their children, but will be made aware of the implications of removing children. Such as:

- Increased vulnerability; vulnerable children have a higher chance of being unable to manage risk when and if they encounter situations (NSPCC 2011).
- It will be the responsibility of parents to provide information on Sex Education issues if they withdraw their child from school Sex Education lessons.
- A pupil may struggle to manage body changes during puberty.
- The pupils will lack knowledge that has been shared with peers in the school.

- A pupil would have less opportunity to practice assertiveness and consent skills in a safe teaching environment.
- If a parent is considering withdrawing their child from Sex Education, they will be asked to meet with the Head teacher to discuss their concerns.
- If it is agreed that a pupil be withdrawn from Sex Education, alternative provision will be made.

Parents will continue to have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the pupil themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.

There is no right to withdraw from the following topics at primary or secondary as we believe the contents of these subjects are important for all children to be taught:

- Primary relationships
- Secondary relationships
- First aid, health and prevention
- Changing adolescent bodies
- Mental wellbeing
- Growing and changing
- Reproduction

The right to withdraw applies to the following topics:

- Sexual relationships
- Sexual health

Equal Opportunities - In support equalities it is expected that all pupils, regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, gender re-assignment, faith and sexual orientation will have the same opportunities to benefit from the sex education resources and teaching methods.

Bullying – Refer to policy document on behaviour. All staff are aware of and act upon incidents/comments relating to sexual bullying/harassment including homophobic attitudes and vocabulary. Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated at Longcause School, whether by pupils bullying pupils, adults bullying pupils, pupils bullying adults or adults bullying adults. Preventing bullying, including cyber-bullying, disability related bullying and homophobic bullying, is important here. Please see our anti-bullying policy for more information on this.

Use of Visitors – Health professionals are sometimes used as part of the curriculum delivery. They have met Plymouth City Councils vetting procedures, are always with a member of staff and are aware of the morals/values framework within the RSE policy.

Named Governor for RSE: Longcause has a named governor for Relationships, Sex and Health Education, who parents are welcome to contact if they have any concerns that they wish to talk to them about. They can be contacted via the Clerk to Board of Governors on 01752 336881.