

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY – 2024-25

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education is considered an essential part of all pupils' education. This is delivered through a Wellbeing and Enrichment Programme set up to help students make the most of the experience and opportunities within College, and to help them cultivate the skills and resilience to cope and thrive in the wider world. Through the programme, we aim to equip pupils with a sound understanding of risk, along with the knowledge and skills necessary to make safe and informed decisions.

The Programme is delivered through PSHE lessons for LC1-LC3, as well other protected times over the course of the year for all , who are allocated the space and time to focus on a particular aspect. In addition, aspects are covered in other curriculum lessons; the co-curricular programme; and various community and enrichment opportunities that occur across the academic year. Sessions are delivered by pastoral staff and staff who tend to have an interest or specialism in a particular area, as well as through contributions from external speakers.

This is a progressive, age-specific programme tailored to the needs of the students who have the chance both to shape its content and comment on its effectiveness.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

We recognise that ensuring our students are educated about sex and relationships is a vital part of PSHE education. As such, we understand that effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It is also crucial that they understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, as well as how to keep safe and stay healthy. In keeping with expectations in all subjects, we believe these lessons should be of a high standard and wide-ranging.

The programme for RSE is offered to all students and is delivered through lessons in the PSHE programme, as well as in Biology lessons. It is provided in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils aged 11 to 16 and is continued in the Sixth Form for pupils aged 16 to 19, as we aim to support them in being well prepared for their lives beyond College.

The intention is to provide students with appropriate, accurate information and the opportunity for discussion so that they can make informed judgements, take individual responsibility for their actions and manage their relationships appropriately. They are also advised about how to find support as needed. Students are encouraged to have respect for diversity, and to develop a sense of their own worth as well as the capability and resilience to enable them to manage risk. The programme will promote good sexual health and educate students about their right to enjoy healthy relationships, based on equality and trust.

At CLC, there is a shared commitment to strive for a more just and equitable society where people's gender; race; ethnicity; or any other protected characteristic is never the reason for preferential or detrimental treatment, rights or opportunities.

Therefore, the programme is designed to be open and inclusive and aims to recognise and meet the needs of young people of different gender identities, sexual orientations, ethnic groups and those with physical or learning needs. We respect the need to comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and seek to ensure students understand what the law allows in relation to the areas being discussed. As such, we ensure we address issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes; recognising that sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

We also appreciate that religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics in terms of the Equality Act 2010. As such, we recognise that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many aspects of RSE and that building on what pupils learn at home is an important aspect of delivering education. We realise that the religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that the topics are handled appropriately. It is expected that parents will discuss their own family values with their daughters, and those delivering the programme should not dictate or impose their views on the pupils. Through general discussion, those delivering the programme may express personal opinions but it will be clearly stated that these are what they are.

The Content of the RSE Curriculum

Lessons should take place in an atmosphere of trust, where ground rules and acceptable behaviour will be reiterated.

Key members of the PSHE team, as well as members of the Biology staff will deliver a range of lessons such as on puberty, personal hygiene, healthy living, menstruation, pregnancy, contraception and STIs as well as broader aspects of sexual health and as they arise from discussion. These staff will receive training on delivering the RSE programme. Aspects of these, including the emotional effects of growing up may also be delivered by members of the Medical Centre, House staff or other members of staff or visiting speakers as required.

In addition, discussion of sexual relationships and behaviour may occur in any subject where it is relevant to the particular part of the syllabus being studied. In dealing with these issues, staff will be aware of the various ethnic and religious groups and the different family backgrounds of the pupils. Material will be appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. For example, Sex and Relationships is part of the RS GCSE syllabus where the ethics about sex are considered and students also study different types of contraception, to highlight different Christian responses.

It is widely agreed that all children and young people must be able to identify abusive behaviour, and be able to seek help if they are experiencing or notice abuse. We will address this through lessons on consent, child-on-child abuse, healthy and unhealthy relationships, harassment, how to stay safe generally and online, FGM, honour based violence, and forced marriage.

Pupil Support

Support for individual pupils and their concerns over relationships and sexual matters will be provided in the Houses and in the Medical Centre, as well as through other channels of support in College. Signposts for help will be shared routinely in PSHE/RSE lessons. As appropriate, access to trained counsellors, and information about support groups and outside agencies will be provided.

Rights of Parents

Parents have the right to withdraw their daughter from lessons covering Relationships and Sex Education, except for those aspects required by law within the Science Curriculum. They would be expected to discuss the matter with the Head of PSHE, Mrs Lisa Shortland, (shortlandl@cheltladiescollege.org) and/or or the Vice Principal, Mr Richard Dodds (doddsr@cheltladiescollege.org). Should parents remain convinced that they wish to withdraw their daughter, they should do so by informing the Vice-Principal in writing.

Monitoring and Review

The member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for Wellbeing and Personal Development will monitor and evaluate Relationship and Sex Education through lesson observation and pupil / staff feedback. Input from parents will also be facilitated.

The Policy will be reviewed at the very least every two years, though it will be updated as required, particularly with updates about best practice and any changes to regulation.