



**TRRS RELATIONSHIPS
&
SEX EDUCATION POLICY**

Introduction

At The Roman Ridge School (TRRS), Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) comprises an important part of our wider Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) curriculum. Our RSE programme is centred on personal health and safety, caring for others and building healthy relationships, which is essential for our students to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.

RSE helps young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood, with a focus on healthy relationships and self-advocacy. We aim to present relevant facts in an objective and balanced manner. Lessons are set in the context of the family, friends and wider societal issues and address responsibilities that arise from within these relationships.

Teaching of Relationships & Sex Education

Selected components of RSE will be taught across the curriculum, but specifically in PSHE and Science. Form tutors are responsible for teaching PSHE, with aspects of the programme taught by members of the wider PSHE Team, including the School Nurse, and any external professionals as required.

Selected components of the RSE curriculum are introduced to Senior School students only. Our RSE programme is guided by the curriculum published by the UK Department of Education and selects components that align with our local laws and uphold widely held societal values, to create schemes of work that are appropriate and relevant for our context. More specifically, the school exercises its discretion as a UK Independent School Overseas, opting not to include modules that refer to sexual activity, sexuality, different sexual orientations, gender identities and same-sex relationships, which in our Ghanaian context are not currently considered appropriate topics for discussion and indeed are contrary to legislature.

We teach our students about the importance of abstinence from sexual activity to minimise the risks to their health and safety (i.e. teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, etc.) We refer to the Science Primary & Secondary National Curriculum on all issues related to Human Growth & Sexual Reproduction, including puberty. Further, our modules on Cyber-bullying and online safety are linked to similar modules in the Computing Primary & Secondary National Curriculum.

Our RSE programme is culturally sensitive, which means that it may be inappropriate for young people to be taught particular items in mixed groups. At times, Girls/Boys in the year groups may meet with female/male Form Tutors separately to discuss issues in the PSHE/RSE curriculum that are especially personal and sensitive. For example, Middle School girls may meet to discuss the importance of good hygiene practices when menstruating.

RSE resources are selected and checked to ensure they are culturally sensitive and appropriate, positive, healthy, unbiased messages and age-appropriate. All resources and materials are uploaded to MS Teams and available to parents.

Teachers make a point to ensure all members of the class understand that discussions during PSHE/RSE must be rooted in mutual respect and maturity. Staff approach lessons from an unbiased and objective position, free from any personal beliefs or sentiments, using clear unequivocal language in an objective manner and using the correct terms for all body parts. In the event staff need to explain what a 'slang' term means they will explain that some find it very offensive. Staff will use their judgement in discussion depending on the understanding and maturity level of learners.

How will staff deal with controversial questions?

It must be stated clearly that TRRS promotes abstinence and strongly discourages students from engaging in any sexual activity because it is risky behaviour. It poses serious consequences to adolescent health and safety (pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, mental and emotional distress etc) that must be always carefully considered.

At every opportunity, we remind students that all decisions have consequences (health, safety, social, emotional, etc.) We encourage our students to always think about possible consequences of the decision to be taken and to take full responsibility for the choices they make, as each individual is responsible for protecting their personal health and safety.

Should topics be raised that may be construed as controversial or even offensive to some of our families, staff have been trained to offer an informed yet impartial opinion on all matters of possible controversy and neither promote or condemn the personal/cultural/religious/political practices of others. Staff will use such situations as a teachable moment of diversity and will explain that points of view may differ depending on cultural context and personal beliefs. What may be widely accepted in one context may not be relevant or widely accepted in another. We encourage learners to ask their Parents any questions outside the planned programme.

We encourage staff to use their professional judgement to answer questions in front of the whole class or individually. Staff must refer to our Child Protection & Safeguarding policy in the event a student raises an issue that needs to be flagged and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer of Management (i.e. report of exploitation, abuse)

Safety and Confidentiality

Staff are guided by The Roman Ridge School's code of ethics with regards to privacy, confidentiality and discretion, which are outlined in our Staff Handbook. We make it clear to pupils that staff Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality to any of their students. In any case where child protection

procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first. This is in line with our Safeguarding policy. Staff are to follow agreed practice based on the guidance in our Staff Handbook.

Teachers are aware that during discussions around what is, and what is not, appropriate in a relationship can lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. In such situations, Teachers will follow laid down protocols to alert the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Head of Section or the Principal.

Parental Rights and the Curriculum

All parents are informed about all topics to be covered across all classes at the start of every term, including PSHE/RSE. Likewise, when topics in the Science Curriculum related Human Growth & Sexual Reproduction are covered in Science (from Class 5) Parents are specially notified by email and encouraged to read through all materials and chapters related to the topic, so that they are equipped to answer any questions from their child.

Parents are encouraged to share any concerns they may have and are free to view any resources or materials to be used.

Some Parents could prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. They have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex education programme except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons) and relationship education. Parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns and decisions with the school at the earliest opportunity. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing to the Head of Section/Principal stating their reasons for the request.

Monitoring & Evaluation of RSE

The PSHE curriculum development team is comprised of Sectional Heads, Principal Teachers, Designated Safeguarding Lead and PSHE Coordinator. This team plans, resources and monitors the delivery of the RSE, providing teachers with the necessary training and tools. The programme is reviewed on an annual basis. Lessons are observed by the team and students may be consulted on the delivery and effectiveness of the lessons.

As part of effective RSE provision, the RSE policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents and that it is in line with current RSE Curriculum guidance.