

Relationships and sex education policy

Introduction and Purpose

The American School in London believes that relationships and sex education (RSE) makes an essential contribution to every student's well-being and preparation for adult life in society. Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. Comprehensive relationships and sex education provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. Students also learn about different family structures and characteristics of caring friendships and healthy relationships. Through this curriculum, children and young people develop essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, mutually respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

Relationships and sex education is a core part of the well-being curriculum. The aim of the relationships and sex education policy is:

- to support all students' right to receive relationships and sex education
- to outline the goals of relationships and sex education within the scope of the well-being program
- to ensure that appropriate guidance is available for the faculty who teach relationships and sex education
- to specify the right of parents to withdraw their children from relationships and sex education.

What is relationships and sex education?

It is part of lifelong learning about human sexuality, relationships, and sexual health. It contributes to the emotional, mental, and physical development of students and prepares them for the experiences, rights, and responsibilities of adult life. At ASL, relationships and sex education is guided by the ASL Health Standards, developed from the WHO Human Sexuality Standards. The goals of the K-12 program are outlined below:

Standard 1: Students understand concepts related to health-enhancing behaviors to maintain a safe and healthy environment for themselves and others.

Standard 2: Students develop a healthy sense of self through comprehending concepts related to mental, emotional, and social health and developing self-care and care for others.

Standard 3: Students develop a positive gender identity based on notions of equality and human rights.

Standard 4: Students understand the centrality of relationships to a meaningful life, comprehend there are different kinds of families and relationships, and develop healthy interpersonal relationships.

Standard 5: Students understand the stages of human development, including sexual development and develop a healthy sense of self, one's rights, and the rights of others.

Standard 6: Students understand and critically examine the influence of family, society, culture, and the environment on health behaviors and beliefs.

Standard 7: Students demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills, goal-setting, and decision-making skills to enhance their well-being and to advocate for themselves and others.

Standard 8: Students consider how their actions impact the well-being of others and the planet.

All students are entitled to relationships and sex education. ASL is committed to providing a coherent, well-balanced program of relationships and sex education that reflects the age and developmental stage of the students and meets the particular needs of all gender identities.

Relationships and sex education is not an isolated subject. It is delivered through instruction by the classroom teacher, counselors, or nurses in the lower school and through advisory, health, and science classes in the middle and upper school. Additionally, many subjects may explore some elements of relationships and sex education.

Confidentiality

Teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality in some matters and students will be made aware of this. ASL is aware that effective relationships and sex education can lead to the disclosure of a Safeguarding issue and this will be acted on in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Data Protection Policy. Students will be informed of the sources of confidential help available. All students have access to additional one to one support from external agencies where required through referral.

Parents' Right To Non-Participation

Parents are informed of the content and curricular goals of a sex education unit prior to its start. Parents are encouraged to engage with the classroom teacher, counselor, or nurses about any questions or concerns. Parents may request that children withdraw from all or any part of sex education provided. However, the School believes that sex

education is an integral part of the well-being curriculum and would hope that families would work with the school to clarify any doubts prior to withdrawing their child. In order to request an exemption from sex education, parents must make this request formally to the appropriate divisional principal.

Parents may not withdraw their children from relationships education as through this curriculum, students learn about essential topics such as family structures, healthy friendships and relationships, and online safety. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from the teaching of the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction.

Monitoring and evaluation

The office of teaching and learning is responsible for the well-being and health curriculum of which relationships and sex education is an essential component. The office of teaching and learning will liaise annually with the K-12 well-being team to ensure that the program is delivered with integrity, developmentally appropriate, and properly coordinated and will make any necessary changes.

Approved the ASL Board of Trustees 2 July 2020