

Sex and Relationship Education Policy

August 2022

Vision

Inspiring kind and joyful learning communities who use innovative thinking to build a mindful and sustainable world.

Mission

Verita ensures that kindness is the centre of everything we do. Deeply committed to international and intercultural understanding, Verita provides an academically engaging, inquiry-based educational approach.

Our responsibility is to whole-heartedly assist our students to develop the social-emotional and academic skills necessary to live meaningful, fulfilled, and happy lives.

Preamble:

Verita International School is an institution which aligns with the CIS Code of Ethics and the UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The CIS Code of Ethics highlights that we, as a school, are expected to:

- Fulfil the promises stated in their guiding statements, policies, contracts and promotional materials.
- Strive for excellence.
- Nurture a culture of care in which the education, safety and well-being of students and others are paramount.
- Comply with applicable laws and regulations.
- Respect the dignity and equality of all individuals, groups and cultures.
- Promote global citizenship.

As a school which aligns with the UNCRC, we make an effort on upholding the 45 articles of the convention in our school; please refer to the UNCRC articles [here](#).



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Aim

Verita International School is committed to promoting standards of sexual behaviour based on loving and respectful relationships. The school aims to promote a responsible attitude to sex among young people.

The aims of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy are to:

- Clarify the provision of Sex and Relationship Education to all pupils;
- Set out the statutory provisions;
- Ensure that the Sex and Relationship Education provided by the school supports the personal and social development of all pupils; and
- Explain the responsibilities.

Governing Body Requirement

By virtue of the provisions of the *Equality Act 2010* and Part 3 of the *Independent School Standards Regulations 2014* Verita International School must safeguard the welfare of pupils.

The Principal will ensure that as part of Sex and Relationship Education, pupils are taught about the nature and importance of marriage, and strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage, for family life and bringing up children. Pupils will learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. There will be no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

Pupils will be given accurate information and helped to develop skills to enable them to understand difference and respect themselves and others; for the purpose also of preventing and removing prejudice. Secondary school pupils will be taught to understand human sexuality, learn the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay, and learn about obtaining appropriate advice on sexual health.

Sex and Relationship Education will contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and of society and preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Sex and Relationship Education will not encourage early sexual experimentation. It will teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity.

The biological aspects of human reproduction as part of the National Curriculum remain compulsory for all pupils, but parents may withdraw their children from any other part of the school's Sex and Relationship Education programme without giving reasons.

Consent or otherwise will be secured through an easy to read direct format and the responses logged in a secure auditable way. The details of what the withdrawal of consent entails will be made clear to parents.



It is the school policy that the views of parents must be borne in mind when developing a Sex and Relationship Education Policy. Verita International School will ensure that parents are invited to comment on the extent to which the Sex and Relationship Education Policy reflects their wishes and the culture of the community served by the school.

Morals and Values Framework

Verita International School's approach to Sex and Relationship Education will be conducted within a clear morals and values framework, within legal parameters and based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships;
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views;
- The development of relationships, including sexual relationships, based on mutual consent rather than coercion;
- The right not to be abused by other people or taken advantage of; and
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters.

Sex and Relationship Education Provision

Verita International School has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers in providing Sex and Relationship Education. It is delivered through the Science, Humanities and Social and Emotional framework.

Verita's Sex and Relationship Education programme, which supports the personal and social development of all pupils, is designed to ensure that pupils have the ability to accept their own and others' sexuality, to express their sexuality in positive ways and to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect and responsibility, free from any abuse.

Some themes will be taught starting in year 4 (ex. Puberty), but the majority of the provision will begin in Year 5 and continue in Year 6.

Some elements will be revisited in Y7-Y9 where more specific issues may be raised at this more appropriate age level.

The objectives of the Sex and Relationship Education programme are:

- To explore what pupils know, understand, think and feel and to identify their needs;
- To encourage unembarrassed acceptance of sexuality by using appropriate words for all parts of the body and encouraging positive attitudes to all bodily functions;
- To create an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment;
- To counteract misleading myths and folklore;
- To provide constant reassurance that change is part of the life cycle and to give help in adjusting to such change;
- To enable pupils to accept variation in rates of growth and development (physical, emotional, social) and in ages when puberty or social activities develop;
- To learn to respect each other as individuals and to encourage boys and girls to understand, honour and respect one another;
- To recognise the value of loving and caring relationships and the place of intimacy within them;



- To appreciate the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young;
- To understand and respect cultural and religious influences on individual sexuality;
- To help children know their rights and responsibilities;
- To promote personal safety and self-esteem so that young people are able to resist unwanted touch or advances and can communicate about such matters and seek advice;
- To develop growing understanding of risk and safety and the motivation and skills to keep themselves safe;
- To recognise the issues of FGM and forced marriages;
- To be aware of online and mobile dangers, such as sexting and sending personal photographs;
- To be aware of sources of help and to acquire the skills and confidence to use them; and
- To be aware of the law on sexual behaviour.

The Sex and Relationship Education programme will teach about relationships, love and care and the responsibilities of parenthood as well as sex. Young people need a clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure. It may be necessary to link Sex and Relationship Education with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol, and ensure that young people understand how the law applies to sexual relationships.

Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils, and because teachers are considered by the law to act 'in loco parentis' (in place of parents), parents need to be reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of Sex and Relationship Education.

Pupils need to be taught to behave responsibly towards sex and relationship issues and be able to make informed decisions.

In order to help pupils make informed choices, establish a healthy lifestyle and build up a system of values, the teaching methods used are as important as the content of the lesson. The participation of pupils in lessons is essential in order to encourage them to learn from others and to help them to use appropriate language in ways which are understood by others. This requires the use of a balanced range of teaching methods.

Teaching Methods

Sex and Relationship Education will be carried out in a variety of different ways and by different specialists as well as teachers.

The programme of study for Sex and Relationship Education will demonstrate:

- Integration: Sex and Relationship Education will be integrated into the school's general curriculum through the Social and Emotional Learning and Science programmes which prepares the children for later life.



A Sex and Relationship Education programme is not just what is "taught" in the classroom. Young people learn much from the overall ethos of the school; from the attitudes of staff, from relationships, from gender and other issues. It is important that all staff, whether directly involved in the programme or not, discuss Verita's approach to Sex and Relationship Education in the broad sense. With increased understanding and support, most teachers will feel able to make some positive contribution to the "whole" curriculum.

It is an essential part of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy that the following ground rules are observed in all teaching about sex and relationships:

- No-one (teacher or pupil) will be required to answer a personal question;
- No-one will be forced to take part in any discussion;
- Only the correct scientific name for body parts will be used; and
- Meanings of appropriate correct words (ie. not slang), will be explained in a sensible and factual manner.

Pastoral Support

Sexuality is an important part of living and learning but it may present some individuals with worries and tension at certain times in their lives.

The quality of support available for individual pupils worried or disturbed by some aspect(s) of their development, relationships or environment is of prime importance.

Good teachers have always taken a pastoral interest in the welfare and well-being of children and young people.

Care will be taken in Verita however, in counselling and advice to individual pupils, particularly with regard to their sexual behaviour, and will not trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities. Skilled judgement will be used to know when to counsel and when and how to refer for specialist counselling and support. There will be access to support for teachers in a pastoral role.

Consent is not required in the context of preventative or counselling services offered directly to a child. Verita will ensure that communications with a child on welfare topics are clear and easy to understand regarding consent to care and processing of information.

Morals and Morality

Morals and morality are essential dimensions of sexuality and relationships. The Sex and Relationship Education programme in Verita will respect individual differences inspired by cultural, religious, ethnic and family backgrounds and it will endeavour to promote those values of respect and dignity for human life which are common to all faiths and societies.

Relationships

Relationships have an important part to play in Sex and Relationship Education. Friendship, making relationships and valuing friendship will be topics in the early part of the programme. Choosing a partner, assessing personal qualities, considerations before marriage, together with relationships



within the family, will be considered together with roles, avoidance of stereotyping and acknowledging different attitudes and influences.

Forced marriage is an ever-growing concern and staff at Verita will be encouraged to spot early signs that a pupils may be about to be forced into marriage.

Aspects of Sexual Behaviour Raised Outside the Sex and Relationship Education Programme

The teaching of seemingly unrelated topics in other areas of the curriculum may occasionally lead to a discussion of aspects of sexual behaviour. Provided that such a discussion is relatively limited and set within the context of the other subject concerned, it will not necessarily form part of Verita's Sex and Relationship Education programme.

In such cases, particularly since they may involve pupils whose parents have withdrawn them from Sex and Relationship Education as such, teachers will balance the need to give proper attention to relevant issues with the need to respect pupils' and parents' views and sensibilities.

Verita expects that teachers will draw upon their professional judgement and common sense to deal effectively with such occurrences and that they will be conversant with this Sex and Relationship Education Policy and will act accordingly.

Same Sex Relationships

Verita will include teaching on homosexuality/same sex relationships as part of sexuality in the Sex and Relationship Education programme. The school requires all staff to take account of the anti-discrimination provision in the Equality Act 2010 and to ensure that any information about sexual orientation is fair and balanced.

Physical Development

The awareness of self and physical changes that occur are important in Sex and Relationship Education and will be taught in Verita's programme, including development and puberty (physical/mental and social development) and acceptance of the nature of the sexuality of others together with the pressures imposed by such as peers and the media.

Sensitive Issues

Avoiding sensitive or controversial issues does not make them go away and leaves children and young people confused and at risk. Verita will include discussion of topics such as contraception, abortion, homosexuality, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections in the Sex and Relationship Education programme at an appropriate age, as discussed above.

Visiting Speakers

Visiting speakers may be used to help enhance the Sex and Relationship Education programme in Verita. Where they are used, they will be required to conform to this policy statement. Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with individual pupils.



Confidentiality

As a general rule all information about individual pupils will be kept confidential by Verita. However, school staff are obliged in the interests of pupil safety to pass on any information about a pupil that suggests that they may be at some risk.

Pupils will be reassured that their best interests will be maintained. However, staff cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. If confidentiality has to be broken, the pupil will be informed first and then supported, as appropriate. It would be appropriate to tell a pupil that the ONLY person who will be informed will be the 'designated teacher'.

It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that the school may be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Where younger pupils are involved, this will be grounds for serious concern and child protection issues will need to be addressed.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents and given support to do so. If there is evidence of abuse, the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Students Policy will be adhered to, ensuring that pupils are informed of sources of confidential help.

Training

All staff at Verita are provided with adequate training and support to help them deliver effective Sex and Relationship Education.

Outside agencies may at times be used to compliment the Sex and Relationship Education programme. Where they are used, they will be required to conform to this Sex and Relationship Education Policy. Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with individuals but, in a classroom situation, they should follow school policy.

Responsibilities

Teachers will be trained to deliver the curriculum at each appropriate stage of the students development.

Governing Board

The Board is responsible for:

- The statement of the ethos underpinning the Sex and Relationship Education Policy;
- Creating and keeping under review the Sex and Relationship Education Policy;
- Agreeing and keeping under review a Sex and Relationship Education programme which will take into account the Sex and Relationship Education Policy;
- Ensuring that the Principal, staff, pupils and parents are consulted before the policy and programme are determined; and
- Consulting the Principal, staff, pupils and parents before making any amendments to the policy or programme.



Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Advising the Governing Board on the Sex and Relationship Education Policy and its implementation at Verita;
- Ensuring that an appropriate programme of study is made;
- Ensuring that the programme and policy is co-ordinated by a senior member of staff;
- Involving staff, parents and pupils in determining the programme; and
- Ensuring that the policy and programme is known by staff, pupils and parents.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that any teaching of Sex and Relationship Education or any advice and guidance they may give to pupils is in accordance with this policy; and
- Participating in any training provided.

Equal Opportunities

In developing and implementing programmes of study under this policy, Verita will take into account its Equal Opportunities Policies.

Monitoring and Review

The Principal will monitor the implementation of the policy and will report to the Governing Board.

The Governing Board will review this policy at 4 years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Created and Reviewed by: Damian Ward/Verita Founder and Advisory Board

Policy Category: Health and Safety

Approved by Richard Joannides

Next Review: August 2026

