



31st March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Sexual Harassment

One of the aims of the pastoral team at Langtree is how to empower young people to explore challenging issues, question the world they live in, and ensure they can make the right decisions for themselves. With this in mind, we created our Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) policy and shared this with parents. It can be viewed on the Langtree Curriculum Map.

RSE is a dynamic topic and one that is intrinsically linked to the world around us. Recently, we have seen a collective sense of anger about Sarah Everard's death: a young woman who was walking home and was tragically murdered. This has understandably made the pastoral team, and I am sure many of you, reflect on sexual harassment and what it means to us all. The pastoral team has explored what we can do in school to address this complex and challenging topic. I wanted to share with you how we are planning to approach this subject.

Firstly, we must make it clear that sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up. We will not tolerate, dismiss or normalise sexual harassment as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'just having a laugh'. We understand that attitudes surrounding gender relationships are driven by wider societal factors beyond our school; however, we feel a whole school approach is essential and evidenced by our RSE Policy, our Anti Bullying Policy and our Safeguarding Policy.

Secondly, it is important that our RSE programme, although planned and shared with you, has the flexibility to respond to current events. With this in mind, we will create a tutorial session to inform *all* students about what sexual harassment is. We will continue to review our current provision in Years 7 and 8 to ensure this topic is included in the appropriate areas of the RSE curriculum, for example in the sexting and healthy relationship tutorials. We will also create an additional lesson on sexual harassment for Key Stage 4 students (Year 10 and 11) which will be delivered as part of a wider group of lessons centred on sexual education and consent. Lots of our plans this year for RSE have been hindered by the pandemic, but we aim to ensure we have covered as much of the RSE curriculum as we can. Anything we are not able to adequately deliver this year will be woven into the programme for subsequent years.

Thirdly, we need to ensure that students feel empowered to report any sexual harassment; that they feel confident they will be listened to, and that appropriate action will be taken. We will look at ways

we can enhance our lines of communication. Student forums have, in pre covid time, been opportune moments to listen to how students think about challenging topics and I am keen to reinstate these as soon as possible. We will ensure we listen to students' views on how to communicate concerns and adapt our processes where necessary.

Finally, we are educators and believe in the redemptive aspects of education. Therefore, if any cases of sexual harassment are reported we will endeavour to educate, alongside delivering sanctions where appropriate. In the most extreme cases we will always contact the police.

It is always difficult to decide the correct time to teach our students about certain topics. The government advice is that RSE topics should be 'age appropriate'. However, we all know that children are very different and what is appropriate for one 13 year old may not be for another. However, we do need to embrace important topics in order to allow students to have healthy relationships with others, and themselves.

I do hope this has been useful in explaining our current position and where we aim to be at the end of the year. I will publish, in the school bulletin, when the tutorial on sexual harassment and the KS4 lesson on sexual harassment will be, along with more details of the content. As these lessons may not take place as soon as some of you would like them to, please do discuss these issues with your children. The most useful document I have seen for parents is from the Think U Know website: [Supporting Positive Sexual Behaviour](#). Please also encourage your children to speak to me or their Head of Year if they have any thoughts about how we can approach this topic. Please note that tutorials on Sexting will be delivered in our first week back after the Easter holidays to Year 7 & 8s, and Year 9s will have a tutorial on Sexual Consent - Understanding the Law. If you have any questions please do contact me or your child's Head of Year. Parents do have the option to withdraw children from RSE lessons until the age of 15 if you feel the content is inappropriate. It is important that we work with parents and students to explain our rationale for our RSE curriculum and we welcome all your thoughts.

Kind regards

Ms Burman
Deputy Headteacher
cc : students