



# RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

2023-24

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## Introduction

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE). We set out our rationale for, and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

### Consultations

- Information booklet (sent to parent) and is now available on the school website
- Parent Questionnaire (Spring 2022)
- Review of RSE curriculum content with staff and pupils (Spring 2022)
- Parent's meeting held (Spring 2022)
- Consultation with school governors

### Implementation and Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head teacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and Staff.

The next review date is September 2024

## Defining Relationships and Sex Education

The DfE guidance states that “children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way”

It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of her or him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. In primary schools the focus should be on “teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults. This would include the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.”

## Statutory Curriculum Requirements

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

## Rationale

‘I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL’ (John 10:10)

We are involved in relationships and sex education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity; Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God, gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity.

RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops. Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE, RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

All RSE will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

## Values and Virtues

Our programme enshrines Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to the God's call to love others with a proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body. The following virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

## Aims

We aim to:

- Provide the RSE programme, 'Life to The Full', which has been specifically designed for use in Catholic schools. It is approved by the Diocese of Salford and supports the Catholic ethos.
- Support our children in making sense of the world around them; to understand life processes and to associate themselves with and strengthen their faith

## Inclusion

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond to and ask for help.

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children

## Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Therefore, the school will support parents and carers by providing material to be shared with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more. Parents/carers will be informed when

the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents have had the chance to contribute to the RSE policy through the consultation process, and our aim is that every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents continue to have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

## Balanced Curriculum

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. As a school, we have opted to follow the Ten Ten, Life to the Full RSE Scheme (parent information booklet is available on our school website) which teaches the statutory elements to the RSE Curriculum, whilst remaining sympathetic to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE. Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with our school's promotion of Catholic teaching. We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

## Curriculum Content

The structure of Life to the Full' has been based on 'A Model Catholic RSE Curriculum' by the Catholic Education Service. In Life to the Full, we follow a four-stage structure which is repeated across four different learning stages:

- Early Years Foundation Stage is aimed at Preschool and Reception
- Key Stage One is aimed at Years 1 and 2
- Lower Key Stage Two is aimed at Years 3 and 4
- Upper Key Stage Two is aimed at Years 5 and 6

Within each learning stage, there are three Modules which are based on the Model Catholic RSE Curriculum:

- Created and Loved by God
- Created to Love Others
- Created to Live in Community

Each Module is then broken down into Units of Work.

### **Module 1: Created and Loved by God Units**

Religious Understanding

Me, My Body, My Health

Emotional Well-being

Life Cycles

### **Module 2: Created to Love Others Units**

Religious Understanding

Personal Relationships

Keeping Safe

### **Module 3: Created to Live in Community Units**

Religious Understanding

Living in the Wider World

The programme adopts a spiral curriculum approach so that as a child goes through the programme year-after-year, the learning will develop and grow, with each stage building on the last.

### **Module One: Created and Loved by God**

This module explores the individual. Rooted in the teaching that we are made in the image and likeness of God, it helps children to develop an understanding of the importance of valuing themselves as the basis for personal relationships. At the start of each learning stage in Module One, are a series of short Story Sessions to be completed on consecutive days throughout the week. All of these Story Sessions communicate and help children know more deeply the key idea that we were created by God out of love and for love.

Early Years Foundation Stage – our uniqueness in real terms, including celebrating difference and individual gifts, talents and abilities, looking after and using our bodies (including vocabulary around this topic), the necessity of when and how to say sorry in relationships, a basic exploration of Jesus's forgiveness and growing up as God's plan for us.

Key Stage One – that we are uniquely made by a loving God, that we have differences and similarities (including physical differences between boys and girls and the introduction of the names associated with genitalia), key information about staying physically healthy, understanding feelings and emotions, including strong feelings such as anger, and the cycle of life from birth to old age.

Lower Key Stage Two – understanding differences, respecting our bodies, puberty and changing bodies (recommended for Year 4+), strategies to support emotional wellbeing including practicing thankfulness, and the development of pupils' understanding of life before birth.

Upper Key Stage Two – appreciation of physical and emotional differences, a more complex understanding of physical changes in girl's and boy's bodies, body image, strong emotional feelings, the impact of the internet and social media on emotional well-being (including teaching on pornography), a more nuanced and scientific understanding of life in the womb and how babies are made, and menstruation.

## **Module Two: Created to Love Others explores the individual's relationship with others.**

Building on the understanding that we have been created out of love and for love, this Module explores how we take this calling into our family, friendships and relationships, and teaches strategies for developing healthy relationships and keeping safe. This religious understanding is then applied to real-world situations relevant to the age and stage of the children:

Early Years Foundation Stage – In the Unit 'Personal Relationships', children will expand their vocabulary by applying names to different family/friend relationships, consider positive/negative behaviour in relationships and learn to look to Jesus as their role model for a good friend. They will learn to resolve conflict and the importance of asking for forgiveness when necessary.

Key Stage One – In the Unit 'Personal Relationships', children are taught to identify the Special People in their lives who they love and can trust, how to cope with various social situations and dilemmas, and the importance of saying sorry and forgiveness within relationships.

Lower Key Stage Two – The sessions here help children to develop a more complex appreciation of different family structures and there are activities and strategies to help them develop healthy relationships with family and friends; here, they are also taught simplified CBT techniques for managing thoughts, feelings and actions.

Upper Key Stage Two – The sessions for UKS2 in the 'Personal Relationships' module aim to equip children with strategies for more complex experiences of relationships and conflict; this includes sessions that help children to identify and understand how to respond to spoken and unspoken pressure, the concept of consent and some practical demonstrations of this, and further teaching on how our thoughts and feelings have an impact on how we act.

## **Module Three: Created to Live in Community**

This unit explores the individual's relationship with the wider world. Here we explore how human beings are relational by nature and are called to love others in the wider community through service, through dialogue and through working for the Common Good.

In the first Unit, Religious Understanding, the sessions help children to develop a concept of the Trinity at a level appropriate for their learning stage. In subsequent sessions, children apply this religious understanding to real-world situations, such as the community we live in, and through exploring the work of charities which work for the Common Good.

### **Prayer**

Each Unit has been given its own unique classroom prayer. Sometimes, these are simple prayers to be prayed collectively, at other times they might be more traditional prayers or adopt a variety of prayer styles.

### **Assessment**

There is one Assessment Activity for each Unit of sessions. The activities assess against the Learning Objectives of the sessions within the unit and provide before and after evidence that learning has taken place.

## **Responsibility for the Delivery of the Programme**

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with class teachers, however, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They will be role models for pupils of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and pupils. They will also be contributing to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

## External Visitors

Our school may call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance.

## Other Roles and Responsibilities Regarding RSE

### Governors

- Draw up the RSE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers;
- Ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- Ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g., SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs;
- Ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children;
- Establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used;
- Ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE.

### Headteacher

The Head teacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Diocesan Schools' Service and the Local Education Authority, also appropriate agencies.

### PSHE/RSE Co-Ordinator

The co-ordinator with the head teacher has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSE and the provision of in-service training.

### All Staff

RSE is a whole school issue. All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their pupils. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE. All staff have been included in the development of this policy and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

## Links to other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Behaviour policy, Safeguarding Policy).

## **Children's Questions**

It is our aim that pupils feel confident and comfortable when asking questions both in class and around the school. Teachers will ensure a supportive classroom climate, with clearly defined rules and model the appropriate use of language. In some cases, certain questions may require support and involvement from parents. Not all questions will be answered publicly and the teacher will need to assess the appropriateness of the question to consider if it matches the maturity and understanding of the whole class group. Teachers should never feel pressured into discussing their personal views or experiences and should always respect the sensitivity of their position as a teacher in a Catholic school.

## **Controversial or Sensitive Issues**

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child or young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

## **Supporting Children Who Are at Risk**

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their pupils and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a child or young person is a victim of, or is at risk of, abuse they are required to follow the school's Safeguarding Policy and immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead

## **Confidentiality and Advice**

All governors, all teachers, all support staff, all parents and all pupils must be made aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality. All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, will have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head



teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The RSE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires / response sheets / needs assessment given to pupils, and / or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

## **Disseminating the Policy**

All members and governors will receive a copy of the policy. A copy is available on the school website