



Holy Rood Catholic Primary School, Swindon



Relationships and Sex Education Policy



School Vision:

Belong

At Holy Rood Catholic Primary School, we aim to provide a nurturing and inclusive environment enthused by the Spirit of Christ to enable everyone to make a positive contribution, both to the school and the wider community. We will show love, compassion and respect for others.

A sense of unity will be created by forming relationships that are based on trust, loyalty, forgiveness and acceptance; we will endeavour to act justly and be peacemakers as Christ's disciples, inspired by the Gospel values.

We will encourage a sense of responsibility and help children learn to appreciate God's world around them through reflection, mission, prayer, healing and peace.

Learn

We resolve to develop a sense of awe and wonder at God's creation for our children - where creativity flourishes and everyone is inspired to learn, demonstrating a curiosity about the world around them.

We will strive to ensure that all of our learners are able to face new challenges with confidence, in a Christian learning environment where informed risk taking and a resilient attitude are welcomed, encouraged and achieved.

Our positive and enthusiastic approach to teaching and learning will motivate every person. Each will know that they are uniquely loved by God. We will continue to enjoy our learning and reflect on our efforts and achievements, inspiring us to always try our best.

Achieve

The children will be determined in their daily challenges, gaining confidence in their own ability, imagining what they could achieve with continued effort and commitment and working to fulfil the exclusive plan God has for each of them.

By fully engaging in all aspects of school, children will have had the opportunity to go on to become ambitious and competent individuals, always striving to achieve their full potential and positively participating in God's world.

Children's Mission Statement:





Defining relationship and sex education

The DfE guidance states that “children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships”. High quality RSE does this by promoting their “moral, social, mental and physical development” and cultivating “positive characteristic including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness”. 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. The the focus should be on “teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.” This includes the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe. By supporting confidence and self-esteem, RSE enables young people to make their own choices about whether and when to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, once they reach the age of consent, and to resist pressure to have sex.

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

“As the image of God, we are created for love”

(Guidance for Education in Relationships and Sex Education in Schools)

The Diocese of Clifton urges Governors and Head Teachers of our Catholic primary schools to play a full part in providing a suitable programme of **Relationships and Sex Education**. The work of Catholic schools, in this area, will be informed by reflection on the Scriptures, the words and actions of Christ and the teachings of the Church. There are three important concepts which underpin any thinking on this subject:

- a) The dignity and worth of each person made in the image of God,

“Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.”

- b) We are called to love and be loved,



“God is love and whoever lives in love lives in God.”

- c) We are called to form relationships to live in community,

“Wherever two or more of you are gathered in my name there I am.”

The children in our school come from many different backgrounds. They have different life experiences, different maturation rates and different levels of sexual awareness. The pressures and influences on them from society and the media, often subliminal, will not be underestimated. The school will accompany children on the journey to adulthood, modelling for them and enabling them to become capable of whole and wholesome relationships, and discerning their calling. Above all, the school will help children to understand that they are loved by God and capable of loving.

In partnership with the Diocese of Clifton, our response to Government initiatives on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) must be guided by our vision of what it means to be human and our claims to educate the whole person and the need to address issues raised by the actual experience of pupils today.

In partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a “positive and prudent sexual education” which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

“... children and young people should be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities... they should be given a positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex.”

Aims

To develop the following attitudes and virtues:

- reverence for the gift of human sexuality and fertility
- respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others;
- joy in the goodness of the created world and their own bodily natures;
- responsibility for their own actions and a recognition of the impact of these on others;
- recognising and valuing their own sexual identity and that of others;
- celebrating the gift of life-long, self-giving love;
- recognising the importance of marriage and family life;
- fidelity in relationships.



To develop the following personal and social skills:

- making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity, and which are respectful of the individual's commitments;
- loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships and loving, stable relationships free from exploitation, abuse and bullying;
- managing emotions within relationships, and when relationships break down, with confidence, sensitivity and dignity;
- managing conflict positively, recognising the value of difference;
- cultivating humility, mercy and compassion, learning to forgive and be forgiven;
- developing self-esteem and confidence, demonstrating self-respect and empathy for others;
- building resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups and so developing the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately;
- being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely;
- how to keep themselves safe by assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

To know and understand:

- the Church's teaching on relationships and the nature and meaning of sexual love;
- the Church's teaching on marriage and the importance of marriage and family life;
- the centrality and importance of virtue in guiding human living and loving;
- the physical and psychological changes that accompany puberty;
- the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation;

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 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.

Programme of Sex Education

Holy Rood has consulted with staff, parents and governors in adopting a Relationships and Sex Education programme suited to the needs of our pupils.

It was agreed by all parties at Holy Rood that the school would use the scheme of work entitled '**Life to the Full Plus**'. This programme has been adopted by a wide range of Catholic schools nationally. The scheme of work



sets out a programme to be carried out by the class teacher in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 (YR-Y6) each academic year. The programme builds on previous knowledge and understanding to provide a firm foundation for each pupil suited to their age in an open, honest and dignified way. As a school we have adopted Pathway 2 which is a two-year cycle to ensure that the coverage is comprehensive and that the children have time to learn and apply their new knowledge.

The scheme is available for parents to view if they wish, and they are encouraged to do so prior to the delivery of the programme.

This policy should be read alongside:

- the Secretary of State's 2000 guidance on SRE to which schools must have regard when putting together an RSE policy and any relevant supplementary guidance
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>
- Catholic Education Society: Relationship and Sex Education in Catholic Schools
- http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/images/RSE_in_Catholic_Schools_FAQs_Revised_by_MS_V2_27.10.2020.pdf

The policy will be used by:

- teachers who will look to it to guide their lesson planning;
- parents who will look to see both the RSE curriculum content and the values the school is promoting;
- health professionals, visiting speakers and so on, who will want to know the aims, objectives and values the school's SRE promotes, agreed teaching methodologies and boundaries for their work with young people;
- Local schools, who will want to know the school's approach to RSE so they can plan their curriculum in a way that ensures continuity of values and progression in learning;
- education staff involved in wider RSE provision.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents

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 by letter



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. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme.

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.

Governors

In line with current legal requirements, governors have the responsibility for ensuring there is a Relationship and Sex Education Policy, drawn up in consultation with parents and teachers, which is in keeping with Catholic teaching. If necessary, they need to provide guidelines for the teaching of sensitive issues. They must ensure that the policy is available to parents and that parents know of their right to withdraw their children. Governors must provide sufficient training and resources to see that the topic can be taught correctly, creatively and sensitively. They must ensure that the programme and the resources are monitored and evaluated. This monitoring applies to both the taught curriculum and the wider areas of school life e.g. careers, school nurse. Since all curriculum areas will impact at least indirectly on this area, it is important governors provide training and inset for all staff to help them understand the Church's teaching in this area.

Head Teacher

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, as well as appropriate agencies.

RSE Coordinator

The coordinator, 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. (They may be supported by the curriculum deputy and the member of staff with responsibility for child protection).

Teachers and staff

All adult members of the school community are role models and educators in this dimension of pupils' education.

The teacher's role, in particular, is to:

- be fully inclusive of all children,
- value and affirm all pupils,
- actively promote open and wholesome relationships,



- develop gospel values and effective pastoral systems,
- provide positive and accurate learning about relationships and sex.

For teachers not directly involved in the overt teaching of Relationship and Sex Education there will be opportunities for learning, occurring in all areas of the curriculum, which will indirectly refer to this area and all teachers therefore need to be aware of the school's policy and curriculum for Relationship and Sex Education.

Teachers should advise governors on the content and the organisation of Relationship and Sex Education. They should help develop suitable procedures for dealing with requests from parents to withdraw their children from sex education lessons; contribute to reviewing existing provision and use their professional skills in developing the curriculum.

They should teach Relationship and Sex Education curriculum as detailed in the school agreed scheme of work, 'Life to the Full' and make sure their own understanding of the teaching of the church is clearly developed. Teachers need to participate in timetabling, monitoring and evaluating Relationship and Sex Education.

Pupils

All pupils have the right to be respected as a unique and unrepeatable human being created in the image of God. They have the right to receive accurate information, appropriate to their age and ability, to be able to develop spiritually and morally and to have an informed conscience and be able to make informed choices. All pupils will be helped to develop a positive attitude and sense of responsibility regarding their own and others' sexuality; to have a sense of self-esteem that enables them to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility.

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. They want to ensure that pupils can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people.

Equal Opportunities

Planning should account for the age and ability of the pupils so that all children have full access to RE. Differentiated materials and help will be provided for children with Special Educational Needs and those for whom English is an Additional Language. In our school, all are welcome and we do not discriminate.

Inclusion and differentiated learning

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 own sexual orientation, 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 and ask for help.

Equalities obligations

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

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. (See also Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing Difficult Questions, Page 23 for more detail).

Child protection

All adults have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils. 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. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their pupils and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed.

Staff must be aware that effective Relationship and Sex Education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. 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 safeguarding policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality in matters which are illegal or abusive. 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 Coordinator 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.

Related policies and documents

Religious Education policy

Equality policy

Positive Behaviour policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

Life lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools (Education Committee Feb 2015)

Guidance for Teaching Relationships and Sex Education in Schools (Diocese of Clifton, April 2017)

Appendix A