

Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Primary School



Relationship & Sex Education Policy (RSE)

*“Working together to inspire and learn,
guided by God’s love”*

Introduction

Our belief in the unique dignity of the human person as made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in our school. Our approach to relationship and sex education therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and is presented positively and prudently.

Stemming from this vision of what it means to be human, we seek to educate the whole child: spiritually, intellectually, morally, emotionally, psychologically, and physically towards our understanding of Christian maturity.

All relationship and sex education 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 and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

The DFE guidance defines RSE as "lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full' (Jn.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 relationships as it is there that sexuality grows and develops. RSE 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, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

All RSE will be delivered 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 make up from which they come and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

Catholic Values

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 explored and promoted in an age appropriate manner: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, mercy and compassion.

Our Aims for RSE and our Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education.

Our Mission Statement supports our endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, to help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, to recognise the value of all persons and to develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that we commit ourselves, in partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a 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.

Aims of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

To encourage pupils' growth in self-respect, acknowledging we are all created
in the image and likeness of God.

To prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom/reign of God.

To help pupils develop an understanding that love is the central basis of relationships

To help pupils to understand the nature of relationships and to encourage them
to reflect on their own relationships and respect differences between people.

To help and develop pupils' confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.

To help pupils acquire the skills necessary to develop and sustain relationships.

To offer sex education in the wider context of relationships.

To ensure that pupils protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed.

To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty.

To help pupils to develop a healthier lifestyle.

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.

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; 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 Church's teaching on the nature and meaning of sexual love.

The facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation.

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, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

Parents and Carers

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 conducting information evenings before this unit begins, about the methods and materials used. This will help parents/carers to find out more about the teaching of RSE in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme (also available on our school website). Our aim is that every parent and carer will have full confidence that the school's RSE programme meets their child's needs.

Our role and our programme simply complement their role in nurturing their children's human wholeness. The role of parents and our day to day interactions in school are currently supported by the following curriculum

resources: 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education as prescribed by the Archdiocese of Liverpool, their 'Come and See and RSE links', 'A Journey in Love.' by Sr Jude Groden and the Other Faith weeks of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism..

Right of Withdrawal

It is our hope that parents would wish their children to be involved in the school's positive programme of relationship and sex education, following annual consultation regarding the school's approach. We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. However, we recognise parents have the right to withdraw their children from such lessons (not included in National Curriculum Science) after a parent's information meeting and discussion with the Head Teacher.

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. 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.

Responsibility for teaching the programme

The RSE programme is delivered by 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 between staff, other adults and pupils. They will also be contributing to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

External Visitors

Our school will often 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 which has been developed in line with CES guidance 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools'. Health professionals should follow the school's policies and ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

Other Roles and their Responsibilities regarding RSE

The Governing Body

The Governors will recognise their responsibility to ensure the RSE programme follows Diocesan principles and reflects the Church's teaching. They will consider, approve and ratify the RSE policy annually.

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, also appropriate agencies.

RE Coordinator

The RE Coordinator with the Head Teacher, have the 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 teaching staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

Relationship to other policies and curriculum subjects

This RSE policy is compatible with the school's other relevant policies and documents including: RE, Online Safety, Behaviour and Anti-bullying, Equalities Statement, Inclusion and Safeguarding procedures. Pupils with particular difficulties, whether of a physical or intellectual nature, will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of pupils.

Children's Questions

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.

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.

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 Sex and Relationship Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000, Department for Education and Employment, July 2000 for more detail)

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. In this instance the School's Safeguarding Policy will always be followed.

Supporting children and young people who are 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, but not by compromising Safeguarding. .

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, teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, that in such circumstance 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.

Safeguarding Procedures

The school has procedures to deal with any sensitive issues or children thought to be vulnerable. Staff will pass on any concerns of this nature to the designated child protection officers in school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

RSE will be assessed, monitored and evaluated by the RE coordinator using samples from the pupils books in accordance with the school's monitoring and evaluation policy. Pupils are also given the opportunity for self-evaluation at an appropriate level for each year group

This policy will be monitored annually by the RSE Co-ordinator and will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body as the Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy. Parents will be consulted before any proposed changes.

Updated December 2018