



THE FEDERATION OF ST. EDMUND'S AND ST. PATRICK'S R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOLS

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

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RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

We come to a Roman Catholic School and so believe that Jesus was born, died and rose again for everyone. We aim to help, encourage and show God's way to our families, making sure that our Catholic traditions and faith are kept alive. Each year at school, we learn a little bit more about our faith so that we can grow to love God and each other more.

At our schools, we seek at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. We remember this when putting our policies into practice. Therefore this policy will reflect the Catholic identity and mission of our schools and the values it proclaims.

Definition

As Catholic schools, our role is to nurture the development of the whole person. Children, will learn about their spiritual, social, moral, emotional and physical development in ways appropriate to their age, level of maturity and developmental needs because their ability to form loving, caring, happy, strong, healthy, stable relationships is based upon this lifelong learning. Parents are the primary educators in this regard. This development is also fostered in many areas of our schools' curriculum and includes aspects of character such as respect for one's self and each other, confidence, responsibility and fundamentally an understanding of oneself as a unique and beautiful part of God's creation. Education in relationships and sex will reflect on and explore family life and relationships because it is in the family that children first experience love, affection, respect, forgiveness and other ways of relating to others.

It is in this Catholic context that the definition of RSE, given in current DfE guidance is understood. This guidance states that RSE is the 'lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.' Education for relationships and sex provided in our schools will seek to build on the child's own experience, sensitive to the varied home background of individual pupils. It will incorporate through its aim, objectives, content and teaching, the three main elements of RSE – attitudes and values, personal and social skills, knowledge and understanding within a Catholic context.

Rationale & Aims

The Catholic character of our schools require that, in the specific area of RSE, governors and leaders will:

- promote an approach that presents the teaching of the Catholic Church on matters of relationships and sex, rooted in the biblical presentation of the human person who is made in the image of God to love and to be loved, as a positive and consistent ethic for life, encouraging children to enter into proper and fulfilling relationships.
- promote Catholic belief and teaching concerning human dignity and relationships and, in particular, encourage an understanding of and respect for the sanctity of human life and the sacrament of marriage.
- enable the formation of children through a consistent application of Catholic belief and teaching on matters of faith and morality across the whole curriculum and from all staff.
- promote a developmental approach which gives gradual and positive education in relationships and sex to enable children and young people to have accurate information, seek to develop a properly formed conscience to make right judgements, and to take right actions in the many and varied situations in which they may find themselves. Children will need time to reflect on what they are taught. They will need to ask questions and articulate their thoughts and anxieties in a context of respect and trust.

- recognise the primary role of parents in the education of their children and, ‘in particular, sex education is a basic right of the parents and must always be carried out under their close supervision.’ Our schools recognise that education in relationships and sex is done in the name of parents, with their consent and with their authorization. Consequently, any school based resources used in the education of relationships and sex must always be available to parents for consultation and examination.
- demonstrate pastoral sensitivity for the cultural, personal and family circumstances of children while maintaining the integrity of Catholic belief and teaching.
- monitor the involvement and teaching of external agencies/visiting speakers, and the distribution of resources within school provided by them – in order that all presentations and content are in accordance with the belief and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Objectives

The above aims will be achieved by generating an ethos in the classroom and throughout the school based on love, mutual respect, trust and confidentiality and by meeting the following objectives to enable children to:

- know that they are a unique creation of God and so are able to grow in self-respect developing a positive attitude to themselves and their feelings.
- recognise the importance of forgiveness and saying sorry in relationships.
- understand the reasons for self-respect, and why they should act with respect and responsibility in their relationships.
- reflect on their own relationships, recognizing those qualities that help relationships grow.
- develop knowledge, communication skills and understanding in order to help personal decision-making.
- act responsibly as an individual and as a member of a group.
- identify and have the confidence to talk about their emotions and how to respond positively to them.
- communicate a point of view clearly and appropriately and listen to the views of others.
- take responsibility for oneself and for one’s actions.
- come to understand the influence and impact of the media, internet, peer groups and develop the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately.
- explore and respond appropriately to prejudice and stereotyping.
- think positively about their own body.
- understand, in ways appropriate to their age and development needs, the changes they will undergo including puberty.
- understand that the difference between male and female is part of God’s loving and creative plan.
- know the correct vocabulary for external body parts, sexual organs and menstruation.
- take care of themselves, their health, safety and personal hygiene.
- keep themselves safe and ask for help and support when needed.
- become aware of good and poor choices and their consequences.
- have an understanding of the family, an appreciation of the values of family life and the roles and responsibilities of family members as a spiritual community in which individuals can grow in faith, hope and love.

Statutory Requirements

The Education Act of 1996 consolidated all previous legislation (Education Acts 1983, 1986, 1993) concerning education in relationships and sex. Therefore, arrangements for RSE that have been in place since the Education Act of 1996, the requirements in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (one of which is for headteachers and governors to have regard to the DfE guidance on RSE) and the subsequent guidance from the DfE entitled, 'Relationships and Sex' (2000) forms the context for the statutory requirements on schools in respect of RSE. Below is a chronological list of the statutory and curriculum responsibilities for primary schools followed by a summary.

Schools are currently required to have regard to the Relationship and Sex Education Guidance, published in 2000. This information is meant to give a brief introduction to what the guidance recommends. The Department recommends that all primary schools should have a relationship and sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children. It should ensure that both boys and girls know about puberty and how a baby is born – as set out in Key Stages 1 & 2 of the National Science Curriculum. It also gives further information on what should be taught at these stages and how this should be rooted in the PSHE framework. All children, including those who develop earlier than average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes. In the early primary school years, education about relationships needs to focus on friendship, bullying and the building of self-esteem.

The Education Act 1996

The National Curriculum (NC) Science orders which teach sex education are mandatory for all pupils. These cover: anatomy, puberty, biological aspects of sexual reproduction.

Governing bodies of maintained schools providing primary education must decide whether sex education should be included in their school's curriculum and, if so, what it should consist of and how it should be organized. When sex education is given it must encourage pupils to have regard to moral consideration and the value of family life. They must keep a written record of their decisions and consult parents about their RSE programmes.

PSHE, which can include RSE, (outside NC Science) is not statutory. All governing bodies must have a written statement of whatever policy they adopt on RSE and make it available to parents free of charge.

Learning and Skills Act 2000

The Secretary of State must issue guidance designed to secure that when sex education is given to registered pupils in maintained schools they learn the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children and they are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned.

Headteachers and governors have a statutory responsibility to have regard to the non-statutory 'Relationship and Sex Education Guidance', DfE 2000 when developing their RSE policy. It is important to note that the guidance from the DfE is not a list of what is legally required, only of what must be considered. Therefore, governors must read the guidance and declare that their Catholic Education in Relationships and Sex Policy has been developed with regard to the DfE guidance.

'Relationship and Sex Education Guidance' DfE 0116/2000 (2000)

It is recommended that any RSE not delivered in NC Science is delivered through the PSHE framework.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the relationships and sex education provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum. Schools should make alternative arrangements in such cases. The DfE will offer schools a standard pack of information for parents who withdraw their child from relationship and sex education.

'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' – draft for consultation DfE July 2018

When reviewing our policy, governors have taken into account the latest consultation document from the DfE and note that from September 2020, Relationships Education will become compulsory in all Primary schools. Governors also took into consideration circular no. 1424 issued from the Manchester Health and Commissioning team advising schools on the consultation document.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents

We recognise parents are the first educators of their children. This is their right and duty, and flows from their natural relationship to each other and to their children. We recognise that parents sometimes experience and express difficulty in discussing relationships and sex with their children. The school seeks to support, and not replace them in this situation. Support, understanding and advice will be offered to parents to deal with sensitive issues they may need to address.

The school will provide in advance full information to parents and opportunities for consultation and involvement in the RSE programme.

The school sees RSE as an integral part of the religious dimension of school life and asks that parents, who may wish to withdraw their child from the programme, to discuss their intention, in the first instance, with the Executive headteacher or one of the delegated senior staff (Curriculum Leader, RE leader and SENDCo). In our case, this is the Curriculum Leader. However, parents are entitled to withdraw their child from any or all sessions of the programme and for any reason, except that taught within National Curriculum Science. Parents must inform the school in writing in advance if they intend to withdraw their child so that alternative and appropriate supervision can be made.

Parents' concerns or objections to the content or delivery of the RSE programme should be addressed in the first instance to the Executive headteacher. Should this fail to resolve the matter then the school's complaints procedure should be followed and if necessary contact with the Governing Body.

Diocese

Guided and inspired by the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, we hold that the human person is a spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical unity. All education must be of the whole person. This Catholic school is part of a family of schools and parishes, and is established in order that the education of the children in this school can be taught as an integral part of the Catholic Faith.

It is part of the duty of the Bishop of the Diocese of Salford under the Law of the Church (Can. 796-806) to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools in his area and with the Trustees of the Diocese to ensure that the formation and education provided in such schools are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine.

Governors

The governors of St. Edmund's & St. Patrick's acknowledge and promote the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church, in the fulfilment of their ecclesial and statutory duties, for the benefit of the children in their care.

They recognise that the parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children, and that parents have special rights and duties over education in personal relationships.

The governors intend to comply with statutory requirements.

Executive Headteacher and delegated responsibility

The Executive Headteacher has overall responsibility for implementing the RSE programme and its integration into the school's curriculum and Catholic life.

The Executive Headteacher has a particular duty to respect and support the primary role of parents in this field.

The Executive Headteacher or delegated senior staff (Curriculum Leader, RE leader and SENDCo) will provide parents with full information about the proposed in the RSE programme before it is initiated. Opportunities for consultation and involvement will also be offered.

Staff

Teachers and all those contributing to RSE are expected to work within the values framework as described in this document, in line with the school's ethos.

Appropriate development and training will be undertaken where appropriate. It will accord fully with the approach of the Catholic Church and take into account current statutory requirements.

Outside Speakers; off-site elements

Any Relationship and Sex Education provision will be based in school.

It is the intention that, in those circumstances where any person from outside the school is to talk to an individual pupil or group of pupils about RSE, such persons will, under the supervision of an appropriately trained member of school staff, do so within the principles and guidelines of this policy with particular concern for the primary role of the parents of the child in this area.

The involvement of the School Nurse or any on-site health worker in this programme must be set within the context of this policy. The school's leadership have agreed the expectations and parameters for the work of the School Nurse. No external agency can work in school and give advice that counteracts Catholic Church teaching.

Entitlement & Equal Opportunities

We are committed to equal opportunities and this policy is written in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy. We provide a broad and balanced Relationships and Sex Education for all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or additional needs. We recognise that there are pupils who may require particular support because of their learning needs or disabilities or who have social and communication difficulties or other needs. We recognise that learning and teaching methods may need to be adapted to meet their needs. We shall ensure that children with special educational needs are not, at any point, withdrawn from Relationship and Sex Education because of lack of resources and training or in order to catch up on other subjects.

Organisation of Relationship and Sex Education

RSE within St. Edmund's and St. Patrick's is taught in each year group, using developmental schemes approved by Manchester's Healthy Schools Team. This is used in each year group across school. RSE is delivered either in the Spring or Summer terms of each academic year. Cross-curricular links are also formed with Religious Education and Science as appropriate to the age, understanding and expectations of each year group.

Class teachers are responsible for the delivery of RSE, with support from our designated senior staff (Curriculum Leader, RE leader and SENDCo) and external support (e.g. school nurse) where this is deemed appropriate and beneficial.

Curriculum Content

The schools use the scheme, 'Growing and Changing Together' devised by Manchester Healthy Schools. This scheme celebrates every human being. It promotes British Values. Children learn about how they grow and change. They learn about respect and tolerance. They learn about positive friendships and relationships. It is based in a safeguarding model and the emphasis is on making sure that we help our children to learn the skills to keep themselves safe, happy, healthy and successful in life.

Everything that is taught is age appropriate for the children. For example, younger children are taught about general changes, e.g. crawling to walking, learning to talk and getting taller. They learn about keeping healthy and personal hygiene.

Only Years 4, 5 and 6 learn about changes to their bodies to help them understand adolescence. Year 4 learn about the external changes to their bodies. It is important that children understand the medical names for their body parts. It is statutory for children in Years 5 and 6 to learn about the physical aspect of puberty through the science curriculum. However, it is in RSE that children are supported to cope with these changes emotionally and socially. It helps to prepare them for these changes and understand them. This is particularly important to the children as they can feel very self-conscious about the changes that happen to them, especially as they don't get to decide when these changes happen to their bodies and sometimes need support when they happen.

We want our children to grown up as happy people who know how to stay safe, be healthy, experience positive relationships and are able to 'live life to the full'. (St. John's Gospel 10:10)

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Teachers and other members of staff cannot promise complete confidentiality. Concerns by children to members of staff that indicate that they are at risk will be referred to a member of the designated safeguarding team. Procedures for safeguarding are outlined in the schools' Safeguarding policy which is distributed to all staff. The school will always follow local authority procedures and diocesan guidance when dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues.

Signed _____ (Chair of Governors)

12/12/18

Next review date: December 2020

Reviewed & approved by the Standards Committee on 12/12/18 & ratified by the FGB on the same evening.