



Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy for St Peter's Catholic Primary

Our Mission Statement:

St. Peter's Catholic Primary School is at the heart of a Christ-centred community where every person's uniqueness is celebrated with joy, and is truly valued. We foster caring, supportive relationships based on mutual respect and love. We embrace the different communities to which we all belong - home, school and parish, as well as our local, national and global families. When we welcome the child, we welcome the family. We strive for excellence in all we do, to be the very best that we can be.

"Love one another as I have loved you," John 13: 34

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

School's Aims - Intent:

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education so that our children can be *'the very best that they can be'*. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavor to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this Christ-centred context that we commit ourselves, 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.

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.

We aim to develop the following attitudes and virtues in our children:

- self-respect and self-esteem
- a loving pride in one's own family, and an active association with one's parish community
- an understanding of true friendship
- healthy friendships within school, tolerance with peers, and (with older children) a pastoral attitude towards younger members of the school community as recognition that we all belong to the 'family' of St. Peter's,

- high codes of discipline arising out of respect for one another, respect for adults and respect for their school environment
- citizenship and stewardship in a world created by God
- a Christian love for all members of the wider family of God (an understanding of “Love thy neighbour”)
- recognition that human love takes many forms
- an understanding of how human relationships grow and deepen through friendship, love and affection
- appreciation of the importance of the family unit (regardless of structure / composition)
- to recognise the value of parental partnership (sharing the role of bringing up a family)
- to appreciate the demanding responsibilities of parenthood and the sacrifices which parents have to make for the sake of the new-born child,
- to value every form of life and to value themselves within this framework

Specifically on Sex and Health Education we want our children to:

- celebrate life as a God-given gift
- understand life cycles and life processes
- appreciate the notion that God intended new life to be the result of a union
- (in humans) to associate love as a special feature of this union
- to celebrate their own uniqueness in line with our mission statement
- to know by name the various parts of the human body
- (with Key Stage Two pupils) to recognise, understand and prepare for the physical body changes that they (and their friends) will undergo in the years ahead (puberty). Specifically, children take part in learning about the menstrual cycle and about the physical and emotional changes of puberty.

Defining Relationships and Sex Education

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. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health”.

It is about the development of the pupils’ knowledge and understanding 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 DFE identifies three main elements: “attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding.”

Statutory Curriculum Requirements

The Department for Education states that ‘The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE in our school go further.

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.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DfE (and the Welsh Assembly Government) RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and is 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 their background may be. Support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

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 own sexual orientation, faith or culture. We will ensure the subject 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. As stated in our mission statement, we constantly strive to foster caring, supportive relationships based on mutual respect and love whilst also valuing every person's uniqueness - our RSE curriculum is another opportunity to embed this into our school ethos. *Please also refer to our school Inclusion Policy.*

Equalities

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 age, disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

Content of the RSE 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 about the physical changes of puberty 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.

Three aspects of RSE - attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills - will be provided in three inter-related ways: the whole school/ethos dimension; a cross-curricular dimension and a specific relationships curriculum.

Our developmental programme 'Ten:Ten' has been written as a progressive scheme of work that encompasses PSHE and RSE and supports the Religious Education and Science already taught within the school. 'Ten:Ten' is a wholly Catholic life education programme covering Nursery to 6 and includes relationships education as a key element of the programme. The scheme consists of a comprehensive PSHE and RSE scheme designed to be completed by the child in school under the guidance of the class teacher. It provides the teacher with appropriate 'starting points' on which to build a greater understanding of God, life and life processes, the sanctity of life, personal development, and the values underpinning socially acceptable behaviour.

The children will grow to recognise love (in its many forms) as central to Christian philosophy, and as the basis of all meaningful human relationships.

However, this scheme in isolation are not sufficient. Children will also learn on a day-to-day basis from the Christian example set by adults.

In School, we will further develop the children's understanding through:

- The friendly school environment created by all staff and children
- The care we have and the patience we show towards the children when dealing with accidents, incidents, disputes etc.
- The messages we give out through religious celebrations, assemblies and fundraising, e.g. the way they should treat and relate to each other, the hardship endured by those in our wider world and means by which we can help
- Discussions, displays etc. which bring home to children the importance of the family unit, the protective love and care given by parents and carers, and the ways children should respond to this love
- Promoting tolerance, understanding and forgiveness in both work and play situations
- The friendly interaction we promote with other schools (e.g. sporting competitions) and the encouragement we give and the standards we uphold in terms of sportsmanship - fair-play, accepting decisions and taking both winning and losing in the same spirit
- Our desire to respond to the needs of others (e.g. CAFOD, Willow Wood Hospice and other local charities/events)
- Our acceptance of (and inviting children to take up) the stewardship of a world created by God

Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers 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 with answering any questions they may have about their children's learning. As first educators, parents will lay the foundations for all acceptable patterns of behaviour; leading by example, and sharing with school the joint task of bringing the child through to the age of eleven with a balanced understanding of life and a healthy appreciation of the human relationships they may form in years to come.

Parents 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. There is no right of withdrawal from Relationships Education, nor is there from Health Education. The scheme has a parent portal, which provides materials with which parents can support children's learning.

Responsibility for Teaching the Programme

Responsibility for the specific RSE programme lies with class teachers. However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They will also be contributing to the development of pupils' personal and social skills. 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. Where appropriate, school will refer to the CES checklist for external speakers and organisations.

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

The **PSHE/RSE 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 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 as required for all staff teaching RSE.

Governors

- Review 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
- Ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children from Sex Education;
- Ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE.
- Establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used.

Children's Questions

As a school, we want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. We 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. 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 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 and Young People Who Are at Risk

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, 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.

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 Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

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 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, Headteacher - but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was judged to be in their best interests.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE/PSHE Co-Ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils' work. The programme will be evaluated annually 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.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, the Governing Body and Staff. The next formal review date is January 2028.

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- That families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- that marriage* represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships

Pupils should know

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority

- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships

Pupils should know

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

Pupils should know

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard,
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

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