



Care, Courtesy
& Commitment

RHSE Policy
January 2024

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Relationships, Health, Sex Education (RHSE) Policy

This policy is the result of the following consultation that has taken place:

- Questionnaires to staff / parents / carers.
- Review of RHSE curriculum content with staff.
- Consultation with school governors.

What is Relationship, Health and Sex Education?

The DfE guidance states “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 with adults.” This would include the topics of families and the people who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

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 RHSE 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 a 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. RHSE, 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) RHSE 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 RHSE 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 RHSE 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.

Aim of RHSE and the Mission Statement

Our School Mission Statement

Our mission statement, "In Christ's family we grow together, sharing our learning and love", commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RHSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour 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 context that we commit ourselves, in partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a positive and thoughtful 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.

Objectives

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.
- 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.

Outcomes

We will ensure RHSE 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 looked-after children.

Delivery

At Sacred Heart, RHSE is taught using the Ten:Ten resource; "Life to the Full", which is a fully resourced Scheme of Work in Relationships and Health Education (RHE) for Catholic Primary Schools which embraces and fulfils the new statutory curriculum.

By using this programme, staff and parents will deliver a fully integrated and holistic programme which enables children to “live life to the full” (John 10:10).

Life to the Full is a series of lessons using creative resources, which will engage, inform and inspire teaching and learning.

The Scheme of Work contains three modules, which are 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

Children’s learning will be assessed at the beginning and end of every unit to ensure that they are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. Assessment activities will be implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that children do not feel under pressure and will include self-assessment tasks that will confirm their understanding of the units. The evaluation of teaching and learning assessments will be shared with children and parents as appropriate.

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- discussion
- project learning, art and worksheets
- reflection
- brainstorming
- interactive film & video
- group work
- role-play
- values clarification

Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents/carers are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents/carers in educating their children. Therefore, parents/carers will be informed by email when the more sensitive aspects of RHSE will be covered, in order that they can be prepared to talk about and answer questions about their children's learning. Parents have access to Life to the Full via the Parent Portal. This is an online tool to ensure parents can engage with the teaching and deepen the experience for their children. The Portal also provides content, links and suggestions for home activities.

Parents continue to have ***the right to withdraw*** their children from Sex Education except in those elements that are required to be taught via National Curriculum Science lessons. 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. Please refer to the DfE guidance Page 17 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

Balanced Curriculum

Whilst promoting Catholic values, virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, the Life to the Full Scheme will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RHSE 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 RHSE. We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

Relationships, Health and Sex Education is supported by the school's wider curriculum for Personal, Social and Health Education, (PSHE).

In this way the school can ensure that children:

- Receive their Relationships, Health and Sexual Education in the wider context of relationships.
- Are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences for life in modern Britain.

The school believes that RHSE:

- Is an integral part of a lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.
- Is an entitlement for all children irrespective of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, special needs, culture, faith or religious tradition.
- Should foster self-esteem, self-awareness, a sense of moral responsibility, and the confidence and ability to resist unwanted sexual experience, exploitation and abuse.
- Should be mindful of children's earlier experiences.

- Should provide consistent messages.
- Should be continuous and progressive.
- Should support children as they move from childhood through puberty to adolescence.
- Should provide opportunity for discussion and clarification around values and attitudes.
- Should provide accurate, unbiased information.

Responsibility for Teaching RHSE

Responsibility for the specific relationships, health and sex education programme lies with the RE Lead Mrs Mortimer, RHSE /PSHE Lead Miss H Price, the Science Lead Miss Stewart, and the PE Lead Mrs Smith.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RHSE Life to the Full Scheme. 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 will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RHSE. 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.

Health professionals should follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

Other Roles and Responsibilities Regarding RHSE

Governors

- The RHSE Policy was originally drawn up 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 RHSE within PSHE.

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.

PSHE/RHSE Lead

The Lead 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 RHSE and the provision of in-service training; supported by the Curriculum Leads and the members of staff with responsibility for child protection.

All Staff

RHSE 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 RHSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RHSE. 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.

Relationship to Other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This RHSE 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, Anti-Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc).

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 RHSE 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 RHSE. These may be matters 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 RHSE 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 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. Therefore, a more appropriate time will be found to address this.

Supporting Children who are at Risk

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RHSE takes place. Effective RHSE 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 senior member of staff responsible.

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 RHSE 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 that 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 policy. 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 RHSE 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.

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors in Spring 2024. This policy will be reviewed every year by the headteacher, RHSE Lead, the Governing Body and Staff. The next review date is Spring 2025.