



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) Policy

Aims of Policy:

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE). We set out our rationale for and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

This comes about through consultation through:

- Parent meetings
- Review of RSE curriculum content with staff
- Consultation with school governors

Implementation and Review of Policy

This policy was implemented in the Spring term 2019 after consultation with the Governors, staff and parents. It has been reviewed and updated in accordance with DFE statutory requirements Spring 2020.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Headteacher, SLT, the Governing Body and Staff. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the school website.

Defining Relationship 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”^[1]. 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 DFE identifies three main elements: “attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding”^[2].

At St Cuthbert Mayne the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

Rationale

'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 relationship 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, RSE will be 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 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 household they come from and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

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.

Aim of RSE and the Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement, *Growing together in love and learning as followers of Jesus*, 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. 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 prudent relationships and 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;
- being patient and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships;
- 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;

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; Lessons will 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.

Broad Content of RSE

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 and sex curriculum.

Our programme follows the CES Relationships and Sex Education Curriculum and covers whole school initiatives (eg Anti-Bullying week; Mental Health Week; Feeling Good Week; online safety). RSE naturally links with RE, Science and PSHCE lessons as well as specific relationship and sex lessons.

Curriculum Content

We use *A Journey In Love* to support our RSE curriculum. This is a resource for Catholic teaching of the curriculum and provides a journey in learning across the year groups.

Each year group has a specific area of focus:

Year 3 – How we live in love

Year 4 – God loves us in our differences

Year 5 – God loves me in my changing and development

Year 6 – The wonder of God's love in creating new life.

Appendices to this policy provide further information about the programme and resources for suggested use.

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- reflection
- powerpoints / visuals
- group work
- values clarification
- There will be no formal assessment of RSE

Parents and Carers

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 that will be shared with children in school.

Parents must be consulted before this policy is ratified by the governors. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents have **the right to withdraw** their children from Sex Education aspects of RSE but not the relationships aspects RSE. 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.

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

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with the Headteacher, the SLT and PSHCE leader and is delivered by all teachers.

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 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.

Governors Roles and Responsibilities regarding RSE

Governors:

- Draw up 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, 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.

Confidentiality and Child Protection

Emphasis is placed on the trust invested by parents in staff in the handling of Relationships and Sex Education. Children are told that parents have made a conscious decision to include their children in the programme because they are perceived to have a level of maturity and personal development to receive it responsibly. It is, therefore, **not** to be shared with other children in the playground or younger brothers and sisters who have not reached this level of maturity. They **are** encouraged to share their learning with parents.

Relationship to other policies and curriculum subjects

This RSE 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, 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.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The relationships and sex education programme will be monitored annually. This could be by means of a questionnaire to pupils and parents. This informs the subsequent policy review with staff and governors. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

Complaints Procedures

Parents should adopt the school's usual complaints procedure, i.e. through the teacher, then Head, then Governing Body.

Catholic Doctrine

All teaching in RSE complies with the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

Dissemination of Policy

All teaching staff and governors have access to the school's current Relationships and Sex Education policy. It is available for perusal by parents and other interested parties, on our website.

Links with other policies

The following policies are linked to the Relationships and Sex Education Policy:

- Mission Statement
- Child Protection
- Health and Safety
- Medicines
- PSHCE
- Mental Health and Well Being
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour
- Equalities Scheme
- Online Safety
- National Curriculum 2014
- DFE Relationships Education and RSE & Health Education statutory guidance September 2021
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Policy Review Dates:

Last Review: February 2023

Next Review: February 2025

Appendix 1

A Journey in Love

A Journey in Love is a resource created by Sister Jude Groden of BRES. It is the recommended programme of study for Catholic schools for Sex and Relationship Education, and has been written as a progressive scheme of work that supports the Religious Education, PSHE and Science curricula taught within the school.

As children progress through school, they discover more and more about themselves and the wider world. This thirst for learning new things in all aspects of life is fostered by the school, who attempt to create a safe, stimulating environment for learning; supporting all children in their development. Our mission statement which drives the school, attempts to achieve this goal following the Gospel values of truth and respect, understanding our journey as children of God, both special and unique.

Central to our work within the school is learning about our faith, including understanding ourselves, our position in our community and how we develop as human beings – our spiritual, social, emotional and physical development. This is how A Journey in Love fits in to the school's curriculum. The scheme permeates through all levels of learning throughout the school. It focuses on friendship, family, community, relationships and spirituality; a guide to the children's development as young Catholics.

As you would expect, not all issues related to personal development are covered by the end of Year 6. The content is age appropriate and is taught with sensitivity, taking into account the children's level of maturity in regard to the delivery of the lessons.

As with all aspects of learning, children are naturally curious and many will have questions related to their lessons. Opportunities to discuss questions form part of the lessons and, again, these are treated with care and understanding.

If you do have any questions about the teaching of RSE in our school please come in and speak with Mr Sallis, Headteacher.