

**ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**a part of St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust**

**Policy on Relationship and Sex Education**

*'We learn, love and respect through our faith in Jesus'*

*This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies*

***This policy is closely aligned to the Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education produced by the CES on behalf of the Bishop's Conference. Adjustments have only been made to reflect the needs of our own school and pupil and making reference to the resources we use. The original document can be viewed on the DOW website.***

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their 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.

**Consultation has taken place through**

- pupil focus groups / school council
- review of RSE curriculum content with staff
- consultation with parents through workshops
- consultation with school governors

**Dissemination**

This policy will be available to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff through the school's website. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website and a copy is available in the school office. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the school's website.

**DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION**

The DfE guidance states that, "children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social life in a positive way". It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of her or him being 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, "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. 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"<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, DfEE, 2000

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*Note: Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) has been renamed as: RSE – Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) to emphasise the relationship aspect of RSE: This was one of the recommendations from the Commons Education Committee February 2015.*

### STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

However, 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 (and the Welsh Assembly Government) RSE 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 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 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 explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

### AIM OF RSE AND THE MISSION STATEMENT

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. Furthermore, our school aims state

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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 sexual education"<sup>2</sup> 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, 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.

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<sup>2</sup> *Gravissimum Educationis* 1

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### 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

## 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. (In looking at these questions, it is important to draw links to the school's inclusion policy).

## 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.

## 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.

RSE will be taught a part of our whole school PSHE programme. The scheme of work will contain implicit and explicit learning opportunities and will be developmental and appropriate to children's chronological age and ability within a values-based context.

Due to the unique nature of this part of the whole school curriculum, RSE will also be taught in a cross-curricular manner. RSE is part of both the statutory National Curriculum for Science and Computing (eSafety). Other aspects are taught through PSHE and RE. Specific needs will also be taken into consideration when teaching topics, i.e. loss and bereavement, family breakdowns, damaged friendships, arguments etc. whilst all children will receive the same information in lessons, there will be occasions when it may be appropriate to teach boys and girls separately, e.g. some of the physical changes in puberty, to allow free discussion of topic areas without embarrassment. However, all class members will still have the opportunity to hear the same information given to both sexes.

## PROGRAMME / RESOURCES

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

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The main resource we use Ten: Ten Life to the Full. Life to the Full is a Relationships and Health Education (RHE)\* curriculum programme underpinned by a Christian faith understanding that our deepest identity is as a child of God – created, chosen and loved by God. For other areas of PSHE, that may overlap, we use the Jigsaw PSHE scheme supported. This provides a range of age-appropriate resources and materials used to deliver the RSE programme across the whole school including, storybooks, photographs, group discussion, DVD etc. There is an information evening held each year for parents to view these materials and resources.

Teaching strategies may include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- trigger drawings
- values clarification

(See also 'Sex and Relationship Guidance'. DCSF 2000 for more detail)

### EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Teachers are required to critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through the use qualitative assessment, pupil evaluation and feedback. Pupils will be given opportunities to reflect on their learning during lessons and pupil voice will be a key feature in adapting and amending planned learning activities.

### 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 to be shared with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more. Parents/carers will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents must be consulted before this policy is ratified by the governors. They will be consulted at every stage of the development of the RSE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. 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 RSE 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. 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 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 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 may 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 developed in line with CES guidance 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools'<sup>3</sup>.

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 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 science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE.

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<sup>3</sup> Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools, CES, Feb. 2011

**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/RSE Co-ordinator**

The co-ordinator with the head teacher and DSP 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**

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.

**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, Anti-Bullying policy, Child Protection 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.

Learning about RSE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSE audit.

**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, 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 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.

## SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE AT 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 Child Protection Policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible (DSP).

## 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.

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 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

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The RSE 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 the summer term 2020. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head teacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and Staff.

This policy was reviewed and approved by the **Local Governing Body at their meeting 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

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Appendix A

RSE curriculum overview

	PSHE/SRE		RE links	Science
Early Years	Growing Up	How we have changed since we were babies	God's World – Creation. God loves each of us in our uniqueness	Understand growth, decay and changes over time (Understanding the World)
KS 1	My Changing Body  Boys and Girls bodies	Understanding that growing and changing is natural and happens to everybody at different times.  Appreciating the parts of the body that make us different and using the correct names for them.	Families and Celebrations. Know that as we grow we are loved by our family.  Know that the Church is God's family. We meet God's love in the community.	Using our Senses  Identify, name, draw and label parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with which sense.  Growing up – human body.
Lower KS2	Outside body changes  Inside body changes  Having a baby  Girls and puberty	How our bodies need to change so they can make babies when we grow up. Outside changes and how we feel about them.  How our bodies need to change so they can make babies when we grow up. Inside changes and how we feel about them.  The choice to have a baby; the parts men and women have that make babies and – in simple terms – how this happens.  How girl's bodies change so that they can have a baby when they are an adult – including menstruation.	How we live in love. God loves us in our difference.  God loves me in my changing and development.	Human body
Upper KS2	Puberty for girls  Puberty for boys  Conception  Consolidation of puberty and conception knowledge	Physical changes and feelings about them – importance of looking after yourself.  Developing understanding of changes for both sexes – reassurance and exploring feelings.  Understanding the place of sexual intercourse in a relationship and how it can lead to conception and the wonder of new life.  Consolidating understanding of physical and emotional changes and how they affect us. The story of pregnancy and birth.	Creation – we are a Gift from God. Made in God's image. Right and wrong choices.  The wonder of God's love in creating new life.  Justice and injustice.	Life Cycles-  Reproduction in plants and animals – human reproduction from egg and sperm, gestation periods.  Keeping Healthy, the heart, exercise, substance abuse including alcohol, cigarettes and caffeine.