

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

All Saints Catholic School



“We are all one in Christ, our mission and our responsibility is to recognize all individuals in our community as part of the body of Christ and to value them accordingly in our treatment of them, thriving and progressing in a spirit of togetherness”
(1 Cor. 12:29)

**Approved by
Chair of
Governor:**

Mr. Dominic Savage

Date:

Last reviewed on:

July 2024

**Next review due
by:**

September 2025

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

“We are all one in Christ, our mission and our responsibility is to recognize all individuals in our community as part of the body of Christ and to value them accordingly in our treatment of them, thriving and progressing in a spirit of togetherness”

(1 Cor. 12:29)

Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in a Catholic school must be rooted in the Catholic Church’s teaching about what it is to be truly human in Christ, what it means to live well in relationship with others and be presented within a positive framework of Christian virtue. For this reason, we encourage Catholic schools to speak about Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) rather than Sex and Relationship Education (SRE), since this emphasises the importance of healthy relationships to human well-being, as the core learning within an RSE curriculum.

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.

The following consultations have taken place:

- pupil focus groups / school council
- questionnaires to parents / carers, any meetings etc.
- review of RSE curriculum content with staff and pupils
- consultation with wider school community e.g. school nurse • consultation with school governors

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Headteacher, SLT member responsible for RSE, the Governing Body and Staff. The next review date will be September 2024.

Dissemination

This policy will be shared with all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and nonteaching members of staff. It is also available to all parents through the school’s website. 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 lives in a positive way”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. 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.”² This would include the topics of families and the people who care for me, caring friendships,

¹ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 4

² Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 19

respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe. In Secondary schools RSE should “give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).”³

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections and although this does not apply to academies, its inclusion is best practice and helps to prepare our pupils for the modern world as informed and rounded young people. The reasons for our inclusion of RSE in the Curriculum at NBS go further than what is required as outlined below in section 5.0.

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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 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. 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. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

³ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 25

VALUES AND VIRTUES

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales states: We expect all Catholic schools to ensure that space is made in the curriculum for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). The content of what is taught must express the teaching of the Church, and should be delivered to suit the age of the children or young people to whom it is addressed. We need to recognise that without providing an education in this area, we leave many young people vulnerable to receiving their education second-hand and often from sources, which damage them and their capacity to love.⁴

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. These virtues are necessary to living well in a relationship with others and these virtues underpin the teaching with the aim that they emerge as a consequence of the lessons. Virtues are habits which are learned from experience and are gained through imitation, the same virtues being modelled by those who teach. They express the qualities of character that schools should seek to develop in their pupils, through their exemplification by the whole community of which the pupils are a part. These virtues reflect our Christian tradition but they are also, of course, fundamental human virtues which are universally shared.

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 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"⁵ 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;

⁴ Learning to Love: An Introduction to Catholic Relationship and Sex Education for Catholic Educators, (p. 3)

⁵ Gravissimum Educationis 1

- 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.

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;
- how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

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 line with our SEND Policy, the RSE curriculum is delivered in partnership with parents as school staff will identify key barriers to learning. They will plan accordingly to ensure that the student is able to access the curriculum in a similar way to their peers and to engage fully with the school environment.

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. In line with our Equalities Policy, we aim

to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At All Saints School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

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.

PROGRAMME / RESOURCES

Appendices to this policy provide further information about the programme and resources that will be used to deliver the RSE course. All Saints Catholic School has purchased the Life to the Full course produced by Ten Ten Resources. Life to the Full has been approved by Brentwood diocese. Furthermore, Ten:Ten have entered into a partnership with the Catholic Education Service and the Department for Education to provide training for teachers in Catholic schools on the subject of the new statutory curriculum. Therefore, we are confident that this programme is a very good fit for our school.. This model curriculum covers KS3, KS4 and KS5 and is based on three core themes within which there will be broad overlap. It is adaptable to the age and ability of the pupils.

The three themes are:

Created and loved by God (this explores the individual) The Christian imperative to love self, made in the image and likeness of God, shows an understanding of the importance of valuing and understanding oneself as the basis for personal relationships.

Created to love others (this explores an individual's relationships with others) God is love. We are created out of love and for love. The command to love is the basis of all Christian morality.

Created to live in community – local, national & global (this explores the individual's relationships with the wider world). Human beings are relational by nature and live in the wider community. Through our exchange with others, our mutual service and through dialogue, we attempt to proclaim and extend the Kingdom of God for the good of individuals and the good of society.

Each theme covers the core strands of 'Education in Virtue' and 'Religious Understanding' as well as strands which cover the PSHE content of the theme.

Teaching strategies will include:

- Establishing ground rules
- Distancing techniques
- Discussion
- Project learning
- Reflection
- Experiential
- Active
- Brainstorming
- Film & video
- Group work
- Role-play
- Trigger drawings

- Values clarification
- Outside agencies delivering sessions

Pupil's learning in RSE will be assessed by the teacher's through discussions and activities which are designed to assess student's knowledge and understanding of the topic being discussed and studied.

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 continue to 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. 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 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 (in secondary schools/academies relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). 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 a range of staff – The is jointly co-ordinated by the Head of RE, PSHE co-ordinator and Head of Science who are responsible for the overall planning interpretation and review of the programme. However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They will be role models for students of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults

and students. They will also be contributing to the development of students' personal and social skills.

All Staff have received the relevant training to deliver the content to a good standard. The training was by the Ten:Ten Theatre company which is approved by the Catholic Education Service and recommended by the bishops of England and Wales.

External Visitors

Our school will at times 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. 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 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools.'⁶ 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 link governor shares 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.

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.

Assistant Head Teacher – Catholic Life

Will provide a link between the Head Teacher and PSHE Co-ordinator and will liaise with and support the PSHE Co-ordinator in the shaping of the RSE curriculum.

RSE Co-Ordinator

The Head of RE and PSHE Co-ordinator has an overview of the RSE curriculum. They have 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, ensuring that content of the RED is reflected in the RSE curriculum.

⁶ CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2016

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 RE Curriculum. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying policy and Citizenship & PSHE Policy).

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 RE 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 a 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 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions, Page 23 for more detail⁷)

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 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 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 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 AHT Catholic Life and Head of RE 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 at appropriate points in the delivery cycle of the course 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.