



St Francis

Catholic Primary School

Policy for Relationships Sex and Education September 2020

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full' (Jn.10.10)

School Mission Statement

The mission of Saint Francis Catholic Primary School is to prepare today's children for tomorrow's world in partnership with parents, the parish and the local authority.

The teaching will "reflect the Gospel values of love, peace, joy, truth, justice, forgiveness and the unique value and dignity of each individual."

A broad, balanced, relevant school curriculum enables each child to realise their full potential in all areas – spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical and social.

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

The policy will be approved after consultation with parents, pupil discussion groups, staff and governors. The consultation includes a review of the RSE curriculum and materials used in school and staff and parent questionnaires.

Rationale

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.

‘To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

Subjects covered in RSE represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others’, wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.’ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance 2019.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales¹ and as advocated by the DFE relationships and sex education 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.

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 sex and relationship education 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 to “positive and prudent” sex and relationship education”² It is characterised by a whole person, whole school, and developmental approach³ thus setting it firmly within our distinctively Christian vision of education.

Objectives and outcomes see appendices - Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, statutory guidance - for full list of end of school phase outcomes.

Children should:

- know that they are a unique creation of God and so are able to grow in self-respect developing a positive attitude to themselves, their feelings and their sexuality
- understand that self-giving love is central to relationships
- recognise the importance of forgiveness and saying sorry in relationships
- understand the reasons for self-respect, and why they should act with respect and responsibility in their relationships

¹ Education in Sexuality, Catholic Education Service

² ‘Declaration on Christian Education’, Vatican II, 1965

³ Education in Sexuality, Catholic Education Service

- reflect on their own relationships recognising those qualities that help relationships grow
- develop knowledge, communication skills and understanding in order to help personal decision-making
- act responsibly as an individual and as a member of a group
- identify and have the confidence to talk about their emotions and how to respond positively to them
- communicate a point of view clearly and appropriately and listen to the views of others
- take responsibility for oneself and for one's actions
- come to understand the influence and impact of the media, Internet, peer groups and develop the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately
- explore and respond appropriately to prejudice and gender stereotyping
- think positively about their own body
- understand, in ways appropriate to their age and developmental needs, the changes they will undergo including puberty
- know the correct vocabulary for external body parts, sexual organs, and menstruation
- think positively about other people, adults as well as children
- take care of themselves, their health, safety and personal hygiene
- know that some diseases are infectious
- keep themselves safe and ask for help and support when needed
- become aware of good choices and wrong choices and their consequences
- make good choices about what to do in particular situations
- manage relationships with friends confidently and effectively
- develop the ability to form positive, non-exploitative relationships and reject bullying
- explore and reflect on their own experience of people who are married
- have an understanding of the family, an appreciation of the values of family life and the roles and responsibilities of family members
- have an understanding of a family as a spiritual community in which members can grow in faith, hope and love
- understand that the difference between male and female is part of God's loving and creative plan
- recognise and appreciate the Catholic belief in the importance of marriage for family life and the bringing up of children

Outcomes of the RSE programme

We hope that by the end of primary school, children feel equipped to make positive choices about their bodies and their relationships guide them through the changes of puberty and into adulthood. Children will know how to adequately care for their bodies physically, emotionally and hygienically. Pupils will know and understand the Church's view on matters of a sexual nature and understand the morals and values linked with this. Pupils will have a basis on which to form healthy and respectful relationships, and understand how to ensure they are treated with dignity.

Statutory Curriculum Requirements

We are required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. 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 and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.⁴ They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

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.

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 ensuring that pupils receive clear scientific information as well as covering the law.

Equality

We will ensure equality by ensuring SRE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team and Governors are responsible for ensuring parents are given the correct information about the RSE Journey in Love Programme. The designated RE Governor and RE subject leader are responsible for ensuring the RSE curriculum is in line with Church teachings and other school policies.

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 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. They are supported by members of staff with responsibility for child protection.

All Staff

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.

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with the relevant curriculum staff. This will normally include science, religious education, physical education, RSE and PSHE.

Parents

Recognising that parents are the primary educators of their children the school will seek to support them in this task. Parents have the right to 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 sex and relationship education programme.

Should parents wish to withdraw their children sex education they are asked to notify the school by contacting the head teacher. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education (but not relationships) delivered as part of statutory RSE and not those elements which are required by the Science National Curriculum.

Provision / Programme

Programme

The school will follow the 'Journey in Love' Programme which will be mapped alongside other provision including teaching in RE, PSHCE and Science.

Organisation

Our Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum framework is based on five core themes, within which there will be some overlap. The five themes are:

Moral (this explores the individual)

Children will learn: about the Christian belief to love self, made in the image and likeness of God, and an understanding of the importance of respecting, valuing and understanding themselves as the basis for personal relationships.

Spiritual (this explore the individual's approach to the world and relationships through their relationship with God)

Children will learn: about the Christian belief in a personal relationship with God which will guide their relationships with others.

Physical (this explores the individual's response to the world as they change and develop physically)

Children will learn: about how they change and grow, the changes that will take place in their body and rooted in the command to love, the basis of all Christian life.

*They will learn the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation

Emotional (this explores the individual's relationships through their emotional responses and how to deal with them)

Children will learn: about the changes which happen in life, how to manage their feelings and behaviour rooted in Gospel values.

Social (this explores the individual's relationships with others in the local community and the wider world)

Children will learn: how human beings live in the wider community, including how to keep safe in situations with others and how to spread the Gospel for the good of individuals and the wider world.

The curriculum framework document in the appendices shows how the RSE objectives are covered in different areas of the curriculum and school activities.

Specific Issues

Inclusion and differentiated learning

Children with SEND

It is of paramount importance that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have access to the RSE curriculum. Children with SEND are more vulnerable to bullying and abuse so it is essential that staff use the SEND policy to ensure children with SEND can access and understand the RSE curriculum fully. Furthermore, some children with particular SEND needs, for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, those with communication and interaction needs, will particularly benefit from targeted work in these areas. We will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

Relationship to other policies / initiatives

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework and thus contribute to the school's National Healthy School Standard. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is cross-referenced to the Child Protection/ Safeguarding 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.

Guidelines

The governors recognise that RSE can be a sensitive issue for all concerned and are concerned that teachers' training and support needs are properly provided for. The governors therefore require the school to provide such training and support to all those involved in the RSE programme. This training will cover legislative requirements, Church teaching, the demands of this policy and the development of appropriate skills to deliver the RSE programme.

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 child protection 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 is a victim of or is at risk of abuse they should follow the school's child protection policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

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. Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

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'. DCSF 2000 and Welsh Assembly Government, Sex and Relationship Education in Schools, Circular 019/2010, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly, 2010 for more detail)

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.

Safeguarding Procedures

If a teacher has any concerns re the welfare of a particular child then that teacher will make a dated note of their worries and liaise with the nominated persons on the staff. Any information thus obtained will be regarded as strictly confidential and will be passed to staff on a need to know basis only. After consultation it is the decision of the Head teacher as to whether the information is forwarded to the relevant body.

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.

If there is a suspicion of possible abuse teachers will follow the school's child protection / safeguarding policy.

External Visitors

National Healthy School criteria 1.7 requires schools 'to involve professionals from appropriate external agencies to create specialist team to support the delivery and improve skills and knowledge...'

Our school will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of health promotion, in particular RSE within schools. It must however be noted that such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. The delivery will also be in line with the Church's teaching⁴.

Benefits of external visitors to RSE:

- Bring a new perspective to a subject;
- Offer specialized knowledge, experience and resources;
- Make the topic less embarrassing because the visitor is a 'safe stranger';
- Form a friendly link to the community and make local services more accessible;
- Add variety to the curriculum;
- Give support to teachers

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'

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.

Monitoring, review and evaluation

The relationship and sex education 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 should be reviewed and 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.

Dissemination

The draft policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's prospectus 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 web site.

Implementation and Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head teacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and Staff. The next review date is September 2022.

⁴ Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools, CES, Feb. 2011

