



Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy for Catholic Schools

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Introduction

Our Mission Statement



Growing in God's love.

Together we welcome and respect others.

Loving, sharing, celebrating.

Learning to be the best we can be.

This policy has been written in accordance with our school mission statement. At St. Clement's, we learn together, striving to reach our true potential to be the best that we can be, developing knowledge, skills and attitudes to help us to live our lives as God intended in a nurturing and secure environment where mutual trust and respect underpin all that we do.

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) 2024 in line with DfE guidance and expectation. We set out our rationale for, and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

Consultation on this policy

As set out in the Baptism Rite, St Clement's Catholic Primary School recognise that parents/carers are the first and foremost educators of their children. Good communication and consultation with parents/carers is therefore vital as we support them in their role to develop their children's understanding of Relationships and Sex Education.

- This policy has been developed St. Clement's RSE policy is written in line with model policies disseminated by the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.
- The policy was written in consultation with the school governors, Head Teacher, RE and PSHE lead. Parents/carers have been involved in developing this policy and materials and resources have been shared with parents/carers in summer 2024 with an opportunity to respond via a questionnaire. This policy includes all statutory information and is tailored to the needs of the children and families of St. Clement's.

- Resources should be made available for review and parents' concerns addressed.
- In preparation for delivering this education, St Clement's staff have worked together over many months to develop a shared understanding of the best way to approach Relationships and Sex Education in our context.

Dissemination

The policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website and a copy is available in the school office.

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, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

Statutory Curriculum Requirements

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.(Appendix 1). Parents are **unable** to withdraw pupils from these statutory sessions.

Through Relationships Education, we will teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and / or report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring that children understand that they have a right over their own bodies. Appendix 2 sets out statutory requirements for Relationships Education in Primary Schools. 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’ (John, 10:10)

We are involved in relationships and sex education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church’s teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

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 4,19 and 25

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

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 Relationship and Sex Education 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” 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.

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 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.

We intend that the school's RSE shall be delivered primarily by class teachers with a cross curricular and integrated approach and embedded in the wider context of the school's PSHE, Citizenship, SEAL and RE programme ("To know you more clearly" and in Year 4 and 5 "Come and See"). St Clement's School also sets out a range of planned opportunities for children to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. In line with our school Inclusion Policy, high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.

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.

Programme / Resources

St Clement's has agreed to use the approved programmes 'A Journey in Love' and "Life to the Full" as recommended by the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton. Teaching will be whole class, mixed gender learning, with opportunities for a separate boys' and girls' forum to facilitate the needs of the individual child if necessary or requested. Teaching will comprise the use of a range of strategies, including but not limited to:

- Drama / role play
- Story telling
- Conscience Alley
- Video and audio recordings
- Opportunities to ask and answer questions
- Personal reflection journals
- Spoken and written feedback

- Individual, paired and group work
- External speakers
- Children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND) will have support in varying ways depending upon their individual needs and in consultation with their parents/carers.

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

Assessment

A record of each session is kept in each teacher's planning for the delivery of RSE. The programme will be assessed, monitored and evaluated by the RSE Coordinator in accordance with the school's monitoring and evaluation policy. Pupils are given the opportunity for self-evaluation at an age appropriate level.

Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers 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 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 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 head of school. 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. 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 lies with the individual class teacher, under the guidance of the RE Lead, PSHE Lead and Senior Leadership Team.

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 will often 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 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'.²

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.

² CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2016

Other Roles and Responsibilities regarding RSE

Organisation

Governing Body

- 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 is in accordance with other policies, eg, SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs;
- Ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE.

Headteacher

The Headteacher 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 headteacher, 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 related policy documents for Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Pupils with additional needs 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. The governors believe that children are best educated and 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 DFE Statutory Guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions, Page 23 for more detail).

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, for example where a child's questions hint at abuse, are deliberately tendentious, or are 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 and safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated safeguarding lead.

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, for instance in matters that are illegal or abusive. Teachers will explain that in such circumstance they would have to inform others, e.g. parents, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head of School, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE Co-ordinator alongside the Link Governor 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. 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.

Appendix 1

Primary Science Curriculum

Key Stage 1 (5-7)

Statutory

- identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with
- each sense.
- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food and air)
- describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene.

Notes and Guidance (non-statutory)

- The focus at this stage should be on questions that help pupils to recognise growth; they should not be expected to
- understand how reproduction occurs. The following examples might be used: egg, chick, chicken; egg, caterpillar,
- pupa, butterfly; spawn, tadpole, frog; lamb, sheep.
- Growing into adults can include reference to baby, toddler, child, teenager and adult.
- Pupils might work scientifically by: observing, through video or first-hand observation and measurement, how
- different animals, including humans, grow; asking questions about what things animals need for survival and what
- humans need to stay healthy; and suggesting ways to find answers to their questions.

Key Stage 2 (7 – 11)

Statutory

- describe the changes as humans develop to old age.



Notes and Guidance (non-statutory)

- Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the
- changes experienced in puberty.
- Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans;
- by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.

Statutory

- Recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents
- Notes and Guidance (non-statutory)
- They should be introduced to the idea that characteristics are passed from parents to their offspring, for instance by
- considering different breeds of dogs, and what happens when, for example, Labradors are crossed with Poodles.



Appendix 2

Statutory Primary Relationships Education

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how



to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships

Pupils should know

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character,
- personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships

Pupils should know

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.



- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

Pupils should know

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.