



RSE Policy

Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School

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Approved by: Governing Body
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Introduction

Our Lady & St Joseph Catholic Primary School follows the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, in its daily life through celebration of the Liturgy and through following the values taught in the Gospel of Jesus and our school's Mission Statement:

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 our approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

A consultation and training process has been undertaken November 2020 which consists of the following

- pupil focus groups / school council – scheduled for September 2020
- Information sessions and letters to parents, feedback and response forms completed
- review of RSE curriculum content with staff and governors
- consultation with wider school community e.g. school nurse
- consultation with school governors
- Diocesan training

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors in the Spring 2021.

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

Dissemination

The draft policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and nonteaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website and copies can be obtained from the school office. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the school's web site.

Defining Relationship and Sex Education

The DFE guidance defines RSE as “lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health”. It is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of themselves as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. The DFE identifies three main elements:

“attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding”.

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 will also be delivered in conjunction with teaching the Religious Education programme and as part of the statutory element of the Science National Curriculum.

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. RSE will be taught in accordance with the principles set down in other relevant school’s policies such as the Equality Policy.

The school will use ‘A Journey in Love’ to deliver the RSE curriculum content within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church.

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

Throughout 'A Journey in Love', an aspect of the mystery of love is focused upon in each group, children and young people are encouraged to marvel at the wonder and beauty of God's creative love. This is reflected in each stage of a person's growth in the Primary Years through a series of suggested, progressive and developmental tasks, activities and reflections which focus on physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.

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

A Journey in Love highlights the importance of parental input and children will be told to discuss their lessons at home. As a parent, you have the right to withdraw your child from Sex Education at anytime if you wish to do so.

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" which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

Aims of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

- To encourage pupils' growth in self-respect, acknowledging we are all created in the image and likeness of God
- To help pupils develop an understanding that love is the central basis of relationships
- To help pupils to understand the nature of relationships and to encourage them to reflect on their own relationships and respect differences between people.
- To develop pupils' confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.
- To help pupils acquire the skills necessary to develop and sustain relationships
- To offer sex education in the wider context of relationships.
- To ensure that pupils protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed.
- To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty.
- To help pupils to develop a healthier, safer lifestyle.
- To prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom/reign of God.

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;
- 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.

Love...

At the heart of Christian faith is love: St. John says that God is love (1 John 4:9) and the whole purpose of Christianity is to live it as fully as possible in and through love. This means that we have to link every aspect of our being, from birth to death, with love.

Love starts to enter our life from the moment of birth when we are held tenderly in the arms of our mother and developed throughout our first intimate relationship of childhood with our parents, family members, friends and teachers.

At puberty, sexual characteristics develop and we begin to seek someone outside of the family with whom we can grow in love, usually ending in marriage.

The whole purpose of education at home and in our primary school is to connect every aspect of growth, physical, emotional, intellectual and social with love. The ultimate goal is to enable adults to fully love themselves (to accept themselves positively) and in turn love their neighbour (making themselves fully available to others).

Through our love for others, we link ourselves with God the Father, through Jesus Christ his Son, and through the Spirit.

The programme for Relationships and Sex Education which we have chosen to share at Our Lady & St Joseph Catholic Primary School is called 'A Journey in Love'.

Themes Explored

Themes explored in each year group:

- Early Years: The wonder of being special and unique
- Year One: We meet God's love in our family
- Year Two: We meet God's love in the community
- Year Three: How we live in love
- Year Four: God loves us in our differences
- Year Five: God loves us in our changing and developing
- Year Six: The wonder of God's love in creating new life

Early Years

Aim: To explore the wonder of being special and unique.

Social and emotional learning intention: To recognise the joy of being a special person in my family.

Physical learning intention: To recognise that we are all different and unique.

Spiritual learning intention: To celebrate the joy of being a special person in God's family.

Year 1

Aim: To focus on families and specially growing up in a loving, secure and stable home.

Social and emotional learning intention: To recognise signs that I am loved in my family.

Physical learning intention: To recognise how I am cared for and kept safe in my family.

Spiritual learning intention: To celebrate ways that God loves and cares for us.

Year 2

Aim: To describe how we are growing and developing in diverse communities that are God-given.

Social and emotional learning intention: To recognise the joy and friendship of belonging to a diverse community.

Physical learning intention: To describe ways of being safe in communities.

Spiritual learning intention: To celebrate ways of meeting God in our communities.

Year 3

Aim: To describe and give reasons for how we grow in love in caring and happy friendships where we are secure and safe.

Social and emotional learning intention: To describe and give reasons how friendships make us feel happy and safe.

Physical learning intention: To describe and give reasons why friendships can break down, how they can be repaired and strengthened.

Spiritual learning intention: To celebrate the joy and happiness of living in friendship with God and others.

Year 4

Aims: To make links and connections to show that we are all different.

To celebrate these differences as we appreciate that God's love accepts us as we are now and as we change.

Social and emotional learning intention: To describe how we all should be accepted and respected.

Physical learning intention: To describe how we should treat others making links with the diverse modern society we live in.

Spiritual learning intention: To celebrate the uniqueness and innate beauty of each of us.

Year 5

Aims: To show a knowledge and understanding of how we grow in awareness of the physical and emotional changes that accompany puberty – sensitivity, mood swings, anger, boredom etc. and grow further in recognising God's presence in our daily lives.

Social and emotional learning intention: To show knowledge and understanding of emotional relationship changes as we grow and develop.

Physical learning intention: To show knowledge and understanding of the physical changes in puberty.

Spiritual learning intention: To celebrate the joy of growing physically and spiritually.

Year 6

Aims: To develop a secure understanding of what stable caring relationships are and the different kinds there may be.

Focusing on Catholic teaching, children will also know and understand about the conception of a child within marriage.

Social and emotional learning intention: To develop a secure understanding that stable and caring relationships, which may be of different types are at the heart of happy families.

Physical learning intention: To explain how human life is conceived.

Spiritual learning intention: To show an understanding of how being made in the image and likeness of God informs decisions and actions when building relationships with others, including life-long relationships.

How will we organise lessons for Journey in Love?

Before the programme begins ground rules are set with the children regarding the kind of positive behaviour expected of every child:

- all children and teachers treat each other with respect, all questions and answers are listened to in a sensitive and sensible manner,
- any child who is silly, or disruptive and who deliberately attempts to embarrass or hurt another member of the group will be asked to leave,
- children may be taught in small groups for some elements of the programme
- some lessons may be taught in single sex groups as appropriate,
- all children will cover the same topics,
- lessons may include; discussions, presentations, questions, written work, homework

What if I don't feel that my child is ready for this programme of work?

We ask that if parents feel that their child may not be quite ready for the content within the programme, they should make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss their thoughts on the matter.

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.

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.

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 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 Head Teacher.

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.

Responsibility for Teaching the Programme

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with the Head Teacher, aspects of this will be delegated to Subject Leaders, such as RE, Science, PE, PSHE and the RSE Subject Leader. 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 '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.

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.

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 Subject Leader 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.

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.

Relationships 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 schools other policy documents:

- Bullying policy,
- Safeguarding Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Behaviour for learning 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 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.

What if a child asks a difficult question?

There are specific areas that we feel should not be discussed within the context of our school lessons, e.g. contraception, as we feel that our children are not yet emotionally mature to handle these issues. These are all topics which are dealt with at secondary school.

If a child does ask a question outside the scope of our programme it will be dealt with in a sensitive and caring manner. We would always ask the child concerned to discuss the issue with his/her parents.

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. 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 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 annually and the results of the evaluation should be reported to 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.

From September 2020, it is a statutory requirement that all schools in England and Wales are teaching Relationship and Sex Education as a fundamental part of the curriculum.

As part of implementing the RSE curriculum, schools must consult with the children, parents, staff and governors to ensure there is a general consensus on our approaches to policy and the curriculum content.

CONSULTATION:

Our Lady & St Joseph Catholic Primary School will be starting their consultation process on Monday 2nd November 2020, the consultation will close on Monday 30th November 2020.

As part of this, parents, staff and governors, will be asked to read through this document and make comments on it.

If you wish to carry out further reading around RSE, the following documents may be of use to you –

- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education, Department for Education](#) Department for Education Guidelines
- [Learning to Love](#) An introduction to Catholic Relationship and Sex Education for Catholic Schools

In order to provide your feedback to this consultation, you will be asked to complete an anonymous Survey Monkey questionnaire. If you would rather have a paper copy of the consultation, you can obtain a copy from the Main Reception.

Consultation Questions

1. Would you like more information about what the school curriculum for Relationships and Sex Education?
2. Would you like support at home, on how to speak to your child about relationship and sex issues?
3. Are there any changes or additions that you think should be made to the RSE Policy?
4. Are there any changes or additions that you think should be made to the RSE Curriculum Outline?
5. Thinking about relationships and sex education in Catholic primary schools, what do you believe is the most important subject area that **should** be taught for different age groups/key stages and why?
6. Thinking about relationships and sex education in Catholic primary schools, is there an area that you think **should not** be taught for different age groups/key stages and why?