

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Relationship and Sex Education Policy 2019 - 2021

Legal Status:	Statutory
Last Review:	February 2016
Review date:	September 2019
Next Review:	September 2021
Responsible Person:	Governing Body

Mission Statement

"The family of St Mary's strives to grow in God's love and care by learning together and valuing the uniqueness of each person."

The vision of education promoted by the Catholic community has always emphasised that our aim is to educate the whole person. Relationships and Sex Education is part of the process begun in the home and which our teachers in partnership with parents and governors seek to continue in our school.

RSE encourages that caring environment that is essential to the development of positive self-esteem, where everybody knows that they are loved by God and are loveable. It provides values, attitudes and knowledge about relationships, the nature of sexuality and our physical nature.

The Governing Body of St Mary's Catholic Primary School believes that sex and relationships education is the entitlement of every child at the school. The school has a responsibility to educate its children in sex and relationships education in a balanced and objective way. RSE is integrated with other areas of the curriculum - Science, PSHE and specifically Religious Education.

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 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.

The DFE identifies three main elements: "attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding".

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is a lifelong process which builds on knowledge, understanding and skills, and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about personal and social relationships and gender issues. The learning process begins informally with parents before any formal education takes place at school.

Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, cultural, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions.

RATIONALE

*'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full'
(John10:10)*

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

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God,

gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity. RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE (and the Welsh Assembly Government) RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

All RSE will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

Teaching RSE should provide opportunities which enable pupils:

- to form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework;
- to explore the various relationships in their personal lives, and examine friendships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect;
- to build the foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life;
- to make positive, responsible choices about themselves and others and the way they live their lives.

AIMS

The aims of RSE are to

- enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child;
- help the child develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships;
- foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework;
- promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions;
- help the child come to value family life and marriage;
- appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood;
- promote an appreciation of the value of human life and the wonder of birth.

Learning Objectives

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self;
- develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth;
- develop an appreciation of the dignity and uniqueness of others;
- understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and in wider contexts;
- develop an awareness of differing family patterns;
- develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts;
- develop personal skills which will help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships;
- develop some coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse;

- acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development;
- develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.

Skills

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to develop the skills necessary to form and maintain relationships and to make informed choices and decisions regarding health and well-being.

They need opportunities to develop:

- *practical skills* for everyday living; for supporting others; for future parenting;
- *communication skills* learning to listen, listening to other's points of view; putting one's own view forward clearly; handling and resolving conflict peacefully; being assertive;
- *decision-making and problem-solving skills* making sensible choices in the light of relevant information; making moral judgements about what to do in actual situations; acting responsibly as an individual or as a member of a group;
- *inter-personal skills* for managing relationships confidently and effectively; for becoming an effective group member or leader.

Morals and Values

RSE should enable pupils to clarify what they believe and why they believe it and develop a respect for the beliefs of others. Pupils need opportunities to explore values and attitudes and to consider how they, and others, are affected by them.

Children should be taught RSE within a framework which encourages the following values:

- a respect for self;
- a respect for others;
- Commitment and trust within relationships;
- Equality in relationships;
- honesty with self and others;
- compassion and forgiveness when people do not conform to their way of life;
- self-discipline.

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.

Relationships between Home, School and Community

The effectiveness of an RSE policy and programme is dependent on a collaborative process involving teachers, parents, governors and other health professionals. Each has distinctive contributions to make. Opportunities should be provided for teachers, governors and parents to raise any issues and concerns they might have about the RSE policy and programme.

The Role of Governors

The governors should foster and support the development of an RSE policy and programme by collaborating with teachers and parents. They should also facilitate the consultative process whereby the school community can respond and contribute. The governors should seek to accommodate and be sensitive to the religious and cultural beliefs of both teachers and parents while fulfilling their responsibility to ensure the availability of adequate RSE for all children.

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.

The Role of Teachers

The classroom teacher has a significant and diverse role to play in the planning and implementation of RSE in the school. At all times the role must be considered to be complementary to that of parents, considering the individual needs, age, maturity, stage of development and family background of the child. Opportunities for in-service courses will support staff in their teaching.

Involving Parents

The home exerts a major influence on all aspects of a child's life, and especially so in the area of relationships and sexuality.

The school will provide information about the health-related topics covered during each key stage and itemise what is covered with each year group. Parents may be invited to the school to review the materials to be used with the pupils.

We will ensure that proper consultation with parents is undertaken and try to take account of any parental concerns expressed to them. The school will make alternative arrangements for any pupil whose parent wishes him/her to be excused from particular, or all, RSE classes.

Child Withdrawal Procedures

Section 405 of the Education Act 1996, which consolidates previous Education Act gives parents the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of a school's programme of sex education - where it is not part of the National Curriculum.

We place the utmost importance on sharing equal and joint responsibility with parents/carers for their children's education, including sexual matters. We do our best to find out from them any religious or cultural views they may have which may affect the PSHE they wish to be given to their children, although we would consider carefully any request that compromised our equal opportunities policy.

We will take every opportunity to inform and involve parents/carers by inviting them to a meeting to discuss RSE in the school. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from RSE lessons, although not those elements included in the National Curriculum Orders for Science, or any other part of the National Curriculum.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from SRE lessons, we ask that they discuss it with the Head Teacher, to be clear about what their child will do when they are withdrawn from the lessons. We should like to make clear that even when a pupil has been withdrawn from RSE lessons, if the pupil should ask questions at other times, these questions would be answered honestly by staff.