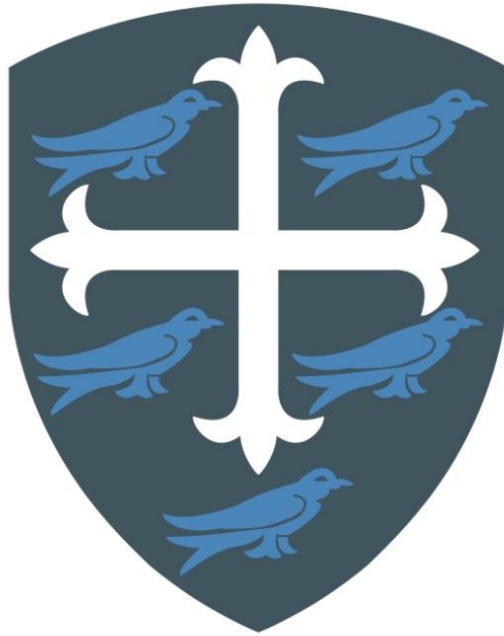


St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Policy Status: Ratified
Ratification Date: 23 September 2026
Next Review: September 2028
Responsible Body: Full Governing Body

Mission Statement

"Inspired by Mary, we grow together in God's love and care,
opening our hearts and minds"

In this policy, the Governors and teachers, in partnership with their Diocesan Schools' Service, pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). We set out our rationale for, and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Headteacher, RSHE Lead and Governing Body, or sooner where required following changes to statutory or diocesan guidance.

This policy will be made available to governors, staff and parents/carers. It will be published on the school website and a copy will be available from the school office.

Defining Relationship and Sex Education

The DfE guidance states that “children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships”. High quality RSHE does this by promoting their “moral, social, mental and physical development” and cultivating “positive characteristic including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness”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 skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.”² This would include the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe. In Secondary schools RSHE should “provide young people with the information they need to develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds...By supporting confidence and self-esteem, RSHE will enable young people to make their own choices about whether and when to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, once they reach the age of consent, and to resist pressure to have sex.”³

Statutory Curriculum Requirements

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSHE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. (This does not currently apply to academies).

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSHE go further.

Rationale

‘I have come that you might have life and have it to the full’

(Jn.10.10)

¹ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, July 2025, p.2

² Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, July 2025, p.7

³ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, July 2025, p.11

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 RSHE 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. RSHE, 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, RSHE 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 RSHE 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 RSHE 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 RSHE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school mission states that we will help them to grow in their hearts and minds. 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"⁴ which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

Age-appropriate provision

The content taught at St Mary's is carefully sequenced and age-appropriate. While this policy reflects the wider principles of Catholic teaching on relationships and human sexuality, pupils are taught only

⁴ *Gravissimum Educationis* 1

content appropriate to their age and stage of development, in accordance with statutory requirements and the Diocese of Westminster Primary RSHE Curriculum. References within this policy to aspects of relationships and sexuality that are not appropriate for primary-aged pupils should not be understood as curriculum content taught to all pupils.

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;

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;

Inclusion and Adaptive Teaching and learning

We will ensure RSHE 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.

Teaching will recognise that pupils come from a range of family circumstances and backgrounds. All pupils and their families will be treated with dignity and respect, while teaching remains consistent with the Catholic character and teachings of the school.

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 RSHE

Three aspects of RSHE - 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 and Resources

St Mary's Catholic Primary School delivers the Diocese of Westminster Primary RSHE Curriculum through the Ten Ten Resources *Life to the Full* programme. Where appropriate, teaching is supplemented through Religious Education, Science, Computing, Physical Education, safeguarding and the wider curriculum to ensure appropriate coverage of statutory requirements, while remaining consistent with Catholic teaching.

Parents and carers may request further information about the curriculum and the resources used. The school will also signpost families to appropriate parent information provided through Ten Ten Resources.

Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as the primary educators of their children and value the importance of working in partnership with families. Parents and carers will be provided with information about the school's RSHE provision and will be informed when particularly sensitive aspects of the curriculum are being taught. Parents and carers may request further information about the curriculum and the resources used.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from any sex education delivered as part of RSHE which is not part of the statutory National Curriculum for Science. Any parent wishing to discuss this should contact the Headteacher.

The draft RSHE Policy was approved for consultation by the Full Governing Body on 8 July 2026. Parents and carers were invited to participate in the consultation and were provided with access to the draft policy and supporting information. The consultation was also publicised on the school website. Feedback received through the consultation was considered before the final policy was presented to the Full Governing Body for ratification in September 2026.

Balanced Curriculum

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 RSHE 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 RSHE. 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 resides with the Headteacher, RSHE Lead and RSHE teachers.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSHE 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 RSHE. 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'⁵.

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 RSHE

Governors

- draw up the RSHE 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 the policy meets statutory requirements;
- 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 RSHE within PSHE.

Head Teacher

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.

RSHE Lead

The RSHE Lead, 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 RSHE and the provision of in-service training.

All Staff

RSHE 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 RSHE in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSHE.

⁵ CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2016

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

RSHE is delivered through the Ten Ten Life to the Full programme and complemented through Religious Education, Science, Computing, Physical Education, safeguarding and the wider curriculum. It includes guidance relating to pupil safety and should be read alongside the school's other relevant policies.

Pupils with specific challenges, whether of a physical or intellectual nature, will receive appropriately adapted teaching and support to enable them to develop mature knowledge, understanding and skills within their capacity. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of pupils.

Learning about RSHE in classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSHE audit.

Children's questions

The school seeks to promote a healthy, positive and safe atmosphere in which pupils feel able to ask questions about their learning without fear of embarrassment, bullying or harassment.

Teachers will respond to pupils' questions sensitively and in an age-appropriate manner, taking account of the pupil's age, maturity and the context of the lesson. Where a question is not appropriate to answer in a whole-class setting, teachers may speak with the pupil separately, defer the question, or encourage further discussion with parents or carers. Staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures where a question or disclosure raises a safeguarding concern.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSHE. These may be a matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSHE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

(See also Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, July 2025, p.40 for more detail)

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 RSHE takes place. Effective RSHE 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 RSHE programme, will have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

Monitoring and evaluation

The RSHE Lead 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 reviewed at least every two years, and as part of the school's ongoing curriculum monitoring. 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.