



## **RSE Policy (Relationships and Sex Education)**

<b>Name of Head Teacher</b>	<b>Mrs Laura Park</b>
<b>Name of Chair of Governors</b>	<b>Dr Vivienne McCabe</b>
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**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, and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.**

## Section 1

### *Consultation*

Working with parents is a vital part of the whole school approach to RSE. Parents are always invited to attend meetings and contribute ideas and opinions through feedback, discussions with the SLT and through parent questionnaires. Parents are shown all resources and lesson outlines with regards to Sex Education well in advance of the scheduled teaching of sensitive subjects. A full training programme has been offered to every member of the teaching and support staff on RSE and is fully endorsed by the Portsmouth Catholic Diocese. Our pupils are given regular opportunities to feedback to us. Governors were consulted throughout the process of choosing and implementing this RSE Curriculum.

## Section 2

### *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”. 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. 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.” 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 RSE should “give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).”

### *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 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.

### *School Vision*

We believe that a bright future starts with an excellent education.

Our vision is to ignite a love of learning that enables every child to achieve their very best. We aim to provide the excellent teaching and genuine nurture that will enable all of our children to be happy, resilient, creative citizens who have the skills, knowledge and passion to change the world.

Our mission at St John's Cathedral Catholic Primary School is to educate the whole child through the Gospel values of Christ and provide academic excellence within a Catholic community, where all are loving to learn and learning to love.

### *Aims*

Every member of our school community is taught to respect and value one another. Wherever possible we make close links between our values, worship and PSHE curriculum. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) are an important and necessary part of all pupils' education. Through a planned programme of learning, we aim to provide our pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need in order to manage their lives both now and in the future. As part of a whole school approach, we aim to develop the attributes our pupils need to thrive as individuals, as part of a family and as a confident member of the wider community. Our school is committed to serving its diverse community and surrounding areas. We recognise the multicultural, multi faith and ever-changing nature of the United Kingdom, and therefore those we serve. We also understand the vital role we have in ensuring that groups or individuals within the school are not subjected to intimidation or radicalization by those wishing to unduly, or illegally, influence them. At our school we embrace the British Values of: Democracy, The rule of law, Individual liberty, Mutual respect and Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. We want our children to learn to understand and respect our common humanity, diversity and differences so that they can go on to form the effective, fulfilling relationships that are an essential part of life and learning.

### *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 other policy documents (please refer to section 8).

## Section 3

### *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.

### 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.

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.

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.

### *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 and leading RSE*

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with the SLT, the Science Leader and RE 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.

The Head Teacher has a general responsibility for supporting staff in delivering this policy and is the lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSE and the provision of in-service training. (Supported by the Deputy Head Teacher and the member of staff with responsibility for child protection). RSE is a whole school responsibility. 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.

### *External Visitors*

Class teachers deliver RSE at St John's but on occasion, will 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'. 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.

## *Curriculum Content*

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

At St John's, as part of the planning and preparation process, teachers make consideration to and use of:

- A cycle of lessons (Year 1-6) for each area of PSHE including RSE, based on the Ten-Ten Live Life to the Full Plus Scheme (programme specifics can be found in our curriculum handbook or on the school website).
- In the EYFS curriculum, Personal and Social, Emotional Development (PSED) is one of the three prime areas which are divided into the Early Learning Goals of: Making Relationships, Self-confidence and Self-awareness and Managing Feelings and Behaviour (more information can be found in our Curriculum Handbook).
- Lessons are designed to be progressive with a variety of opportunities for children to share their thoughts and feelings.
- Challenging questions for pupils to apply their learning in a philosophical/open manner in these subjects, RE lessons and surrounding the themes of Catholic Social Teaching.
- Whole school, Key Stage and prayer and liturgy which make a link to PSHE, British Values and SMSC.
- Use of topical and issues of current affairs, further developing a sense of self and belonging and reliability to the local and wider world in which we live.
- Opportunities throughout the year for children to work with organisations such as Cafod, NSPCC, Bike Ability, The Fire Service, ORCA, Barnardos and our school ELSA.

## *Teaching and Learning*

A range of teaching strategies will be used to ensure that learning in PSHE (including relationships) is purposeful, active and exciting and adapted to meet the needs of all individual pupils at St John's. Our children will work within a safe, secure climate to be able to explore their own and others' attitudes, values and skills. Lessons will involve a high level of interaction where each pupil has planned opportunities for learning which will give them scope to work to their full potential. Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital to successful and effective teaching and learning. Teachers will also regularly assess children's progress using the assessment materials provided by Ten:ten and their teacher judgement. The SLT and specific subject leads will review the programme at the end of each academic year.

## *Inclusion*

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. (In looking at these questions, it is important to draw links to the school's Equality Statement).

### *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, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked-after

## **Section 4**

### *Parents and Carers*

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) 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.

### *The right to withdraw*

Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Relationships and Sex Education provided at school except for those parts included in statutory National Curriculum Science. Those who wish to exercise this right are welcome to explore with teachers any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child at any time in advance of planned lessons. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RSE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. Materials are available to parents/carers who wish to supplement the school RSE programme or who wish to deliver RSE to their children at home.

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 for further details for the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

### *The Teaching of Sensitive and Controversial Issues*

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers will be prepared to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs include: family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, financial issues, bullying and bereavement. Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.

Staff members are aware that views around PSHE and RSE related issues are varied. However, topics are presented using a variety of views, so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to a different opinion. Both formal and informal PSHE and RSE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the designated safeguarding lead, Parents or school ELSA as appropriate in a timely and sensitive manner.

### *Children's Questions*

The governors and staff 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.

## Section 5

### *Training and Support*

Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided. In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding PSHE issues is incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and/or a range of external agencies.

ECTs and those new to Catholic education will be given tailored support based on their individual needs and experiences of teaching RSE.

## Section 6

### *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.

### *Safeguarding*

All staff members at St John's know procedures and protocol for the safeguarding of children. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy or speak to Laura Park, HT and DSL.

### *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 offer. 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.

*Linked Policies and documents*

1. Safeguarding Policy
2. PSHE and RSE whole school Curriculum Map
3. Equality Statement
4. RE Policy
5. Teaching and Learning Policy
6. SEND Policy
7. PSHE Statement