



Human Relationships and Sex Education Policy
(HRSE)

Approved by Governors on 11 May 2021

Review Committee: Standards and Effectiveness

Review: Biannually



Human Relationships and Sex Education Policy (HRSE)

Mission Statement

“Love one another as I have loved you” (John, 15)

We believe that Jesus Christ and his Gospel Call – to love God and all people – are at the heart of what we do.

He inspires us, as children of God, to uphold the dignity of each individual.

We strive to develop a community in Christ which fully supports all in achieving their potential – spiritually, academically and personally.

1. Vision and mission.

Vision for Human Relationships and Sex Education

“Love one another as I have loved you” (John 15)

At Christ the King Catholic High School we are inspired by Jesus to lead lives that are purposeful and enable us to fulfil our talents. We care for one another and show mutual respect and love through our relationships with one another. Jesus is invited into our hearts. In the Beatitudes, Jesus invites us to lead a full life with him by explaining what makes people blessed or happy. Through this we grow in our understanding of how loving our neighbour enables us to be happy too. Happiness can only be truly achieved when we have a good relationship with ourselves, recognising our God-given dignity, which enables us to enter into relationships with other people in our lives, which help us grow and flourish, and we respect that everyone is a unique and beautiful part of God’s creation. We are all children of God, created equal and called to grow in love for him through the person of Jesus Christ and to spread the Good News through the work of the Holy Spirit. We are gifted with the love of God and the ability to love others. Our sexuality is part of our total self-gift of the heart and we seek to bring the young people in our care to know the beauty, goodness and truth of the Church’s teaching about how to lead a fulfilled life as they grow and change from children into young adults.

2. Procedures

The following groups have been consulted as part of producing this policy.

- Staff
- Governing Body
- Parents
- Diocesan Education Service
- Student Council

A copy of the policy is on the school website. It was implemented in 2017 to be reviewed every two years, by the Headteacher, HRSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and school staff in order to ensure that it continues to meet statutory guidelines as well as meeting the needs of our students.

3. Rationale

As a Voluntary Aided school in the Diocese of Lancaster Education Service, we use the term Human Relationships and Sex Education (HRSE) as we believe that relationships education is about all aspects of growing a fulfilled and happy life, sexual education in a dimension of this greater whole.

Our defining belief of Christianity is that God was incarnated. This endows the human form with an extraordinary dignity that goes beyond that of all other forms of life and shows that humanity alone can embrace this relationship with God. Therefore, our relationship with our own bodies is not casual but infused with the Holy Spirit. Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in school must be rooted in this belief which is expressed in the Church’s teaching about relationships, marriage, sex and family life. The Church offers education to young people as it is part of complete human formation. Education about human love is not less a part of a Catholic school’s responsibility than teaching about any other curriculum subject. At Christ the King Catholic High School we teach young people about how to form relationships, including understanding loving relationships and acknowledging that young people’s first experience of love is in the home. We encourage the young people in our school to recognise that they are all children of God and that each person shares a God given dignity. As they mature, we encourage them to follow the example of Jesus and live lives inspired by the Gospel virtues, enabling them to follow His commandment to “*Love your neighbour as yourself*” (Mark 12:31). We also encourage young people to know that God’s love for humanity is so great, he is waiting to forgive us.

“We are all sinners, but God heals us with an abundance of grace and mercy”. (Pope Frances). This is the basis for all relationships in our school. Teaching about relationships, develop personal and social skills and increase the knowledge and understanding of each young person as they go about their relationships and well-being, including sexual health. The Diocese of Lancaster supports all these aims in education about relationships and sex education though recognises that the Church’s objectives in this are about complete human formation.

4. Statutory Framework

The statutory framework that surrounds education about human relationships largely falls within three key areas:

- The National Curriculum (2014)
- Statutory Guidance: ‘Sex and Relationships Education Guidance’ (2000/Updated 2019)
- The Children’s Act (2004)

5. Virtues and Values

Gospel virtues and values underpin the HRSE curriculum. The Christian tradition describes behaviours or habits that lead to happiness, human flourishing and a closer relationship with God as virtues. These virtues are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and fall into two groups. The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (sometimes love is used instead of charity) are about developing the habits of being open to the work of the Holy Spirit and developing a deeper relationship with God through living a balanced and happy, good life. The cardinal virtues of practical wisdom (prudence), justice, fortitude and temperance help people develop habits of reason, fairness, emotional resilience and self-mastery. They are human virtues and, as such, are part of the development of people of all faiths or none as they learn how to flourish, thrive and to have a life supported by strong and caring relationships. The cardinal virtues are drawn from the teachings of Plato and Aristotle and are held in common with people of many faiths and secular beliefs. St Thomas Aquinas attributes the theological virtues as having their foundation in God, they complete the cardinal virtues and are the way people can reach “*the abundant life*” (John 10:10).

At Christ the King Catholic High School we endeavour to live out the Gospel values and virtues. This is evident in the everyday life of the school in many ways, for example:

- Extensive charity work undertaken by the school community.
- School community coming together to worship e.g. assembly programme, liturgies to celebrate special occasions in the school calendar, annual whole school Mass, end of year thanksgiving Masses for each year group. Students take an active role in the planning and delivery of liturgies and worship.
- Daily collective worship and the role of Quiet Mind to enable students and staff time to become closer to God.
- A Behaviour Policy which is based on respect for self and others.
- The role of reconciliation and restorative justice in the daily life of the school.
- The virtues that underpin THE CTK WAY, our school vision and values.

6. The Aim and Objectives of HRSE

The aim of HRSE is part of our wider aim to educate the complete human person. This is expressed in *Fit for Mission? Schools* (2009).

“The fundamental needs of the human person are the focus of Catholic education – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual, and eschatological (our eternal destiny). These fundamental needs can only be truly fulfilled through a rich and living encounter with the deepest truths about God and the human person.

This is why Christ and His Gospel must be the foundation of the educational project of each school and college, because He is ‘the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection’ (Congregation for Catholic Education, The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School). Therefore, the Catholic school or college is called to keep the Gospel whole and alive amongst students, families and staff.”

HRSE should deepen the following areas of understanding:

- To develop self-respect and love of self.
- To invite young people to develop and deepen a loving relationship with God.
- To invite young people to understand that their life has a purpose.
- To invite young people to develop and deepen relationships with each other based on mutual respect and care and to understand this can be an expression of God's love.
- To foster an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church about how to live a full life, a life of virtue, and the place of human sexuality in living a full life, marriage and parenthood.
- A strong awareness of their own safety and the nature of consent.
- To have an understanding of the law in England about Equality and Marriage, appropriate to age and maturity.
- To place personal relationships education within the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- We will teach children about the beauty of the Church's teaching about love and God's love for them which is shared in the Sacraments.

Within this context, the teaching of HRSE at Christ the King Catholic High School will have the following aims:

- To place personal relationships education within the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- We will teach children about the beauty of the Church's teaching about love and God's love for them which is shared in the Sacraments.
- To develop attitudes and values which are truly gospel inspired, such as love, truth and integrity.
- To increase students' awareness of cultural and religious influences in relationships and sexuality.
- To help our young people to learn the importance of values, individual conscience and moral considerations.
- To provide a partnership, built on trust, between parents, carers, teachers and governors, in which the students may explore and acquire information, attitudes, values and beliefs based on facts.
- To help students learn the information and skills which will enable them to make responsible, well informed decisions about their lives.
- To encourage students to behave responsibly and to respect and value themselves and others.
- To help and support the students throughout their physical, moral and emotional development, thus enabling them to live confident, healthy and independent lives.
- To provide a safe, developmental framework within which to explore the often misleading and contradictory messages that students receive from the outside world.
- By using the information and skills acquired, students will be better able to resist the pressures put upon them by their peer group, the media and society in general.
- To offer all students a planned programme of education about human development, relationships, sexuality and family life appropriate to the age and maturity of the class.
- To encourage students to develop a positive attitude towards all bodily functions.
- To respond to the needs of individual students and take their cultures, faiths and family backgrounds into consideration.
- We will encourage the whole school to be like a loving family recognising God as a merciful and generous father as Jesus taught in the Lord's Prayer.
- We will encourage everyone in the school to recognise their part in the school family and work together for reconciliation when relationships in the school falter.
- We will encourage everyone in the school to value humility, mercy and compassion and to respond with empathy to the problems of others.
- We will develop students' knowledge of when to say 'no' to behaviours or attitudes that harm their dignity or the dignity of others and to be responsible for managing their own risk.

- Students will explore the law in regard to consent, the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honor-based violence and FGM and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn, in all contexts, including online (DFE).

7. Inclusion and Equality

At Christ the King Catholic High School we identify that young people mature in different ways. Our teaching about relationships and sexuality is respectful of each child's starting point, their faith, culture and sexual orientation. Lessons are framed by this understanding and young people are encouraged to respect difference and develop an approach of dialogue.

The school will offer support to young people who require or request additional support. This will be done in collaboration with the RE Department parents/carers and the Learning Support Department as appropriate.

The governing body has wide obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and will work to ensure that Christ the King Catholic High School endeavours to do its best for all of the students, irrespective of ability (physical and mental), race, faith, ethnicity, nationality, maternity, pregnancy, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

All matters relating to inclusion and equality should be undertaken in conjunction with the school's Accessibility and Single Equalities Policy.

8. Programme of Study

The Diocese of Lancaster has a programme of study for its family of schools. The programme ranges from ages 2-19 years and provides suggested areas of study and outcomes for the young people it serves. It is envisaged that this programme will be taught in discreet lessons, in cross curricular lessons, particularly RE and Science and fundamentally embedded in the ethos of the school through assemblies, classroom discussions and the centring of all relationships in school on the person of Jesus Christ. The programme of study is based on the teachings of the Church and aims to help young people develop their sense of purpose and character. It should be taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and allow children to express alternative beliefs and viewpoints where they hold such viewpoints where they hold such views. The programme of study will be supported by published resources, recommended by the Diocese, as well as those created by the school. A list of recommended resources is available on the Education Service website.

The delivery of the programme will take place within the RE lessons at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. The importance of loving, caring relationships and acceptance of the sanctity of marriage, same sex relationships and the importance of family life, and the teachings of the Church will provide the context in which we teach.

It is important that certain ground rules are established and made explicit to the students in advance. For example these could include:

- Using the correct terminology (no slang words or expressions).
- Confidentiality will be respected but cannot be promised if there are legal implications or child protection issues (see Safeguarding Policy).
- No one (teacher or student) will have to answer a personal question or be forced to take part in discussion).

All visitors contributing to the delivery of this programme e.g. health professionals, social workers and youth workers will be supervised at all times in lessons by a member of the school teaching staff to ensure compliance with school policy and the teaching of the Church.

The broad areas of content will be available on the school website and are in line with Lancaster Diocesan guidelines.

9. Parents

The Church recognises parents as the first educators of their children. The school should support parents in this task. The role of the school should be that of assisting and completing the work of parents, furnishing children and adolescents with an evaluation of “*sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God*”. (Educational Guidance in Human Love (1983) Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education n69). Students’ first experience of relationships and love are in the home. At our school we seek to work with parents and support them as their children grow and begin to develop their own character as well as experiencing changes in their physical appearance. Parents/Carers have been consulted about this policy before it was ratified by the governing body. The school will involve and support parents in learning about HRSE by sharing the curriculum plans on the school website and responding to parental enquiries.

10. Teaching HRSE

Responsibility for the planning and delivery of the HRSE programme will be that of the Head of RE. HRSE will be taught by teachers in the RE Department; wider aspects of delivery will take place in Science and PSHE lessons and these will be in collaboration with the Head of RE. Extended Learning Days may be used to enhance the delivery of the HRSE programme and these will be delivered by the RE Department. In addition agencies may at times be used to supplement delivery of the programme e.g. Lancaster Diocese, School Nurse, 10:10 Theatre Company, LIFE.

The Headteacher will quality assure the work of the Head of RE in relation to HRSE.

Monitoring of the HRSE Policy and the HRSE programme of study will be undertaken by the link Governor.

All staff are involved in fostering attitudes, living Gospel virtues and shaping behaviour based on a Christian understanding of how to lead a good life. Staff are called to be role models of the school’s ethos in their relationships with other staff members, their conduct towards parents and their care for the children in the school. All staff must conduct their behaviour in school in accordance with the vision and mission of the school.

11. Supporting children and young people deemed to be at risk

The Governing Body desires that HRSE lessons take place in a positive framework, where students experience a growing appreciation for their well-being, and that of others, and a deeper understanding that the Church teaches a path of wholeness of mind, body and spirit. Part of this is creating an atmosphere where questions can be asked openly, know that their questions will be answered and knowing that these questions will not be judged by staff or other students. It is vital, therefore, that time is invested in creating this framework of mutual trust and care, whilst respecting personal information. The HRSE co-ordinator must be given access to support and training to facilitate teachers to enable such discussions by creating carefully negotiated ground rules and distancing strategies. The Department for Education (2000) offers the following guidance for dealing with questions.

Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Many teachers are concerned about responding to unexpected questions or comments from students in a whole-class situation. Having a set of ground rules should reduce the chances of this happening but teachers will need support and training so that they are prepared for the unexpected.

For example:

- *If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the student of the ground rules. If the student needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as a school counsellor, school nurse, helpline or an outside agency or service.*
- *If a teacher doesn’t know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the student or teacher or both together research the question later.*

- *If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a student, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the student will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have a listen to personal experience or inappropriate information. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the student later; and*
- *If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's child protection procedures.*

Sex and Relationships Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000

Sensitive subjects in HRSE always need to be framed so that the young people who are participating know that there is pastoral support if any of the issues discussed make them feel the need to talk further or share confidential information. This should always be done within the safeguarding framework of the school and it is paramount that all staff teaching HRSE have up to date safeguarding professional development.

Questions asked by students that are a cause for concern for the teacher, for example because of their explicit or graphic content, should be addressed in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy and confidentiality procedures (see Safeguarding Policy).

Students will be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers about issues and questions that arise as part of the programme. It will be made clear to all that unconditional confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where illegal or abusive concerns come to light and these will be dealt with under the school's Safeguarding Policy.