

English Martyrs' RC Primary School



Relationships and
Sex Education Policy
2024-2025

School Mission Statement:

We love, learn and grow

Together through

Jesus Christ.

We strongly believe that children leaving our school must be well equipped for the future. We aim to honour and maintain the vision and ideals of the founders of our school, who, inspired by their love of Christ, established in the community a centre of learning based upon the teachings of Christ. We aim to educate each other, create community and witness to Christian values.

Our mission statement commits us providing a welcoming environment and opportunities for children to become independent and active participants in their own learning. We have high expectations of our children and ensure that they reach their full academic and social potential. We aim to provide a rich and balanced curriculum that is well planned and effective in meeting the needs of all our children. We will encourage children to become self-disciplined and responsible and to nurture their awareness, respect and understanding of other people and the shared environment. We aim to create a successful working partnership where all those involved in the school community work together in a spirit of cooperation.

In this policy the Governors & 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

Consultation:

This policy has been written in consultation with our whole school community. It has been shared with staff and governors and parents have been invited to give feedback

Defining Relationships & 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 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 fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children. This would include the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

Statutory Curriculum Requirements:

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

Rationale:

‘I have come that you might have life and have it to the full’ (John 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, RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned 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.

Values & 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.

Aims & Objectives:

We are committed 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.

In partnership with parents, we will 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.

Within our Relationship Education we teach our pupils about:

- looking after and maintaining a healthy body
- respecting their bodies
- building positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect

- respecting the views of other people
- being unique and celebrating the differences between us
- families, including our role in God's family, and how families can be different
- communities and our role within them
- 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 free exploitation, abuse and bullying
- managing emotions within relationships
- 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.

Within our Sex Education we teach our pupils about:

- respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others
- male and female body parts and their various functions
- the development of the baby in the womb
- the internal and external changes which happen in puberty
- sexual development as a natural part of human growth
- the purpose of the menstrual cycle
- how human life is conceived
- male and female reproductive organs

In the Science curriculum the pupils at our school learn:

- that animals, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce
- that humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults
- describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival
- Describe the importance of humans for exercise, eating the rights amounts of different types of food and hygiene

- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age including puberty
- To recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity

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 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, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help. These questions will be responded to in the context of the school's inclusion policy. Pupils with SEND will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding & skills.

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 RSE:

Three aspects of RSE - attitudes and values, personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding will be provided in three inter-related ways: the whole school/ethos dimension; a cross-curricular PSHE approach and a discreet RSE curriculum.

Relationship & Sex Education Curriculum:

We teach about the uniqueness of the Human Being and relationships through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main relationship education in our PSHE curriculum, we also cover relationships in other areas of the curriculum. In particular, Science, PE and RE, which we believe contribute significantly to children's knowledge and understanding of their own bodies and how they are changing and developing. We always encourage our pupils to voice their opinions and discuss any issues they may have with other pupils and adults in the room. The "Come and See" Religious Education Programme for Primary Schools programme is used in the school to support relationship education alongside our broad and balanced PHSE & Values curriculums. The Relationships and Sex Education curriculum will follow the model scheme of work

developed by the CES (Autumn 2016) adapted where necessary to reflect the specific needs of the school. We use a relationship education programme called 'Ten:Ten' with Nursery to Year 6 pupils. This has been carefully written and amended and has involved much collaboration between numbers of people over several years. The programme is intended to support teachers and parents in Catholic schools to enable the holistic growth of children and is recommended by the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle

Teaching & Learning:

Class teachers are responsible for the teaching and learning of Relationships and Sex Education supported by the RE and PSHE Leader. Whilst our PHSE, Values and RE curriculums run throughout the school year, our aim is to teach the specific elements of Relationships and Sex Education during our 'Healthy Week', which takes place during the Summer 2 half term. Teaching strategies will include establishing ground rules, discussion, reflection, active, brainstorming, film & video and group work.

Parents and Carers:

Parents/carers are the primary educators of their children. They will be consulted at every stage of the development of any revision of the RSE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. Resources used by the school in the RSE programme will be made available each year for parents/carers to view.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RSE excepting those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they should notify the school by contacting the Head Teacher in writing. The request will be made on a year by year basis. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning.

Teaching the Programme:

Class teachers have the responsibility for teaching PSHE and, as such, the RSE curriculum.

On some occasions adults from other agencies will be used to deliver some aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. External visitors will be made clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst they are in school delivering a session. Visitors should adhere to our code of practice developed in line with the school visitor policy and will be required to ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice. Whilst the curriculum will be taught across the whole year a greater emphasis on the sexual relationships (age appropriate) will be taught in the summer term.

Other Roles and Responsibilities regarding RSE:

Governors will:

- 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 Department for Education and the local authority, also appropriate agencies.

PSHE/RSE Coordinator:

The coordinator 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.

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.

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. (See also Sex and Relationship Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000, Department for Education and Employment, July 2000 for more detail)

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time.

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 safeguarding lead or the designated deputy.

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 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 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 review of the policy:

The RSE Coordinator will monitor provision by scrutinising plans, schemes of work and samples of pupil's work. The programme will be evaluated biennially. Governors will carry out their own audit of the policy and will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Parents will also be consulted. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Head Teacher, RSE coordinator, the governing body and staff. The next review date is November 2026.