



Holy Family Catholic High School

Virgin's Lane, Thornton, Liverpool L23 4UL.
Tel: 0151 924 6451 Fax: 0151 932 1417
Headteacher: Mr M Symes BA(Hons), NPQH

Thursday, 10 September 2026

Dear Parents,

As we settle into the new school year, I would like to take this opportunity to update you on our Personal Development Programme. This programme encompasses numerous aspects of school life and we are continually striving to provide further enrichment opportunities to equip our young people with the knowledge, understanding and practical skills to live safe, healthy and productive lives.

A significant part of Personal Development, are our weekly 'PD' lessons which cover the main areas of Relationships, Sex and Health Education, along with Economic Wellbeing and Careers Education. We are following the DfE statutory guidance, being implemented across the whole of the UK, from September 2026.

We follow the guidance and adapt quality assured resources from the PSHE Association, which is the UK's national body for PSHE. Our programme is carefully designed from Year 7 through to Year 13, to cover all statutory content and provide pupils with a flow of age-appropriate lessons, covering the wide range of topics that prepare them for future success in life and the modern world.

In particular, RSE lessons include teaching about healthy relationships, including friendships, romantic and more intimate relationships; families; growing and changing, including puberty; personal hygiene; changing feelings; becoming more independent; keeping safe and understanding consent; developing self-esteem and confidence.

All teaching, including RSE content takes place take place in a safe learning environment, by fully trained staff and is underpinned by our school ethos and values. Every lesson is linked to an aspect of Catholic Social Teaching. Additionally, we explore with the pupils how the bible relates to the specific topic being taught that lesson.

Following the visit by the Catholic Schools' Inspectorate in May 2025, the teaching of RSE across the school was judged to be 'robust' and 'rooted in Catholic teaching'. Additionally, it was noted that 'Visiting speakers are carefully vetted to ensure alignment with Catholic values'. We are proud of our programme and have been hailed as a model of excellent practice, across the Archdiocese.

As a school community, we are committed to working in partnership with parents. Please visit the school's website for an overview of the programme. [PSHE/RSHE | Holy Family Catholic High School](#).

I also encourage you to read the RSE policy on the website [Policies and Reports | Holy Family Catholic High School](#)

We are obliged to inform you that you do have a right to withdraw your child from Sex Education which is delivered as part of statutory RSE in secondary schools.

This will be granted up to three terms before your child turns 16, unless there are exceptional circumstances. For example, if there are safeguarding concerns or a pupil has a specific vulnerability. At any time from and during three terms before the age of 16, the legal age of consent – the pupil can opt back in to sex education lessons.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at secondary level. This focuses on how to form and sustain positive relationships, identify risks and harms. This will include topics related to preventing sexual abuse and is done without describing the detail of any sexual activity. It is also not possible to withdraw your child from Health Education or any Sex Education content that is part of the National Curriculum for Science e.g. STI prevention.

If you do wish to withdraw your child, please contact the Headteacher
head.holyfamilyhigh@schools.sefton.gov.uk

At this point we would invite you in to school to discuss your concerns and would be able to show you our age-appropriate resources and how the learning is carefully sequenced across the Key Stages.

We will keep you regularly informed regarding topics that will be delivered each half term. You are welcome to contact me if you require any further information, or wish to discuss in more detail, any aspects of the programme.

Kind regards,

Mrs D Coyne
Leader for the PSHE programme
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