



Mount Carmel

R.C. HIGH SCHOOL



Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Last review date: September 2024 – Mr B Davies

Next review date: September 2025

A Family of Faith & Learning

This policy takes full account of CES guidelines, the school's legal obligations and the latest DfE guidance "Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education" DfE 2019

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 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)."*

DfE "Sex and Relationship Guidance" 2020

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation and Review of Policy Implementation of the policy took place after consultation with the Governors in the Autumn term 2020. This policy will be reviewed every year by the Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum Leader of RE, PSHCE and RSE, the Governing Body and Staff. The next review date is August 2023.

Dissemination

The policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents on demand. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the school's website.

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE 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 apply to academies).

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE at Mount Carmel go further.

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. Because 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 is fully embedded within the Science Curriculum, the Religious Education Curriculum and the PSHCE curriculum, 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.

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 RSE AT MOUNT CARMEL

Our Mission Statement commits us 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. RSE is not just about having the knowledge, it is also about having the skills to make the right decisions. As such, the curriculum will teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships, which will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed. In partnership with parents, to 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.

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.

In addition, Mount Carmel believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life

- Be an entitlement for all young people
- Encourage every pupil to contribute to make our community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn
- Be set within this wider school context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g., nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches
- Encourage pupils and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and care for each other
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer, and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

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;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

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;
- how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

Outcomes

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. In addition, Lessons will also be inclusive of an LGBTQAI+ nature. Lessons will also help pupils 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.

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, 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.

As such, Mount Carmel acknowledges that age-appropriate teaching can help pupils prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils both at school and in society.

RSE will be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school, for example in Science and Religious Education lessons. The curriculum on relationships and sex will complement and be supported by the Trust and Academies wider policies on Equality and Diversity, safeguarding, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) provision and Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education (PSHCE).

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time. Should pupils have a question they don't feel able to ask in the lesson, we will endeavour to strengthen

links with the Pastoral Team, to ensure they can provide links to the appropriate and relevant support, both internally and externally.

The curriculum has been planned and designed using a variety of different sources, such as the Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health education¹ (Appendix 1), PSHE Association: Programme of study for PSHE Education², TenTen Resources³ and ECPublishing Resources⁴.

Our Key Stage 3 and 4 content for PSHCE and RSE can be found [here](#)

Our KS3 and KS4 curriculum for PSHCE will be delivered by PSHCE staff while our RSE lessons will be delivered by RE staff.

PROGRAMME / RESOURCES

We follow the Ten Ten Secondary Programme of Study – “Live Life to the Full” which is endorsed by the CES and approved by the DfE. These resources include a detailed plan of lessons including assessment tools for pupils.

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.

Parents are able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme by visiting the RSE section of the school website. Login details can be found on that page.

Parents continue to have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children, they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher in writing.

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 Page 17 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

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, this will be delivered through Religious Education, Science and PSHCE.

Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE (in secondary schools relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). 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 lays with the Curriculum Leader of Religious Education, PSHCE and RSE, Curriculum Leader of Science and when relevant, Curriculum Leader of PE

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.

OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSE

A Whole School Approach

Governors will be consulted about the RSE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governors' meetings.

Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team: 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.

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.

Parents/carers can access this policy through the school's website. They have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons if they wish. We will seek and take account of the views of parents/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with them.

Outside agencies and speakers may be called upon to provide support, guidance and deliver aspects of the RSE curriculum. The school will only work with those who are appropriate to pupils' needs and who are sympathetic to the Catholic ethos of the school. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions.

Pupils have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate to RSE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their RSE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.

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 the school's other policy documents (for example, Anti-bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc)

Learning about RSE in RE, PSHCE and Science classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the PSHCE and RSE Audit

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.

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 circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., Designated Safeguarding lead, parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Curriculum Leader of RE, PSHCE and RSE 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 evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires / response sheets / needs assessment given to pupils, and / or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. 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.

Right to be removed from sex education

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE (they cannot be withdrawn from relationship education). Before granting any such request, we will require the Headteacher to discuss the request with the parents and carers. This is to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum at which point parents and carers are welcome to review any RSE resources the academy uses. If you wish to withdraw your child from sex education, then a letter or email must be sent to Mr Bowers (Headteacher) xbowers@mountcarmelhigh.lancs.sch.uk

Following the discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' and carers' request to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should plan to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

The Headteacher and PSHCE lead will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, the pupil will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

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