**St. Bridget’s Catholic Primary School**

**HRSE (Health, Relationships and Sexual Education) Policy**

*Learning to Love, Pray and Grow Together as a Community in the Light of Jesus Christ.*

Written by Jane Summerson

Approved by Governors: Review date: September 2025

Mission Statement:

*Learning to Love, Pray and Grow Together as a Community in the Light of Jesus Christ.*

**Intention of HRSE:**

‘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 HRSE 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. HRSE, 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) HRSE 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. At St. Bridget’s, 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 HRSE 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.

**Process:**

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”. We promote this fully at St. Bridget’s:

1. Our focus at St. Bridget’s Catholic Primary School is 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.”
2. This would include the topics of families and the people of whom care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

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

**Implementation of values and virtues:**

The Life to the Full programme embodies 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. The School uses a powerful combination of the TenTen (Life to the Full) resources, along with Picture News and resources produced by the PSHE Alliance, regular Circle times, Fitter Futures, Project Evolve and the daily advocation of Catholic values, to promote holistic children throughout their time at St Bridget’s.

**Aim of HRSE and the mission statement:**

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that HRSE 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. It is in this context that we commit ourselves; 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.

**HRSE 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. 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.

**Impact on pupils is 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, implementation and differentiated learning:**

We will ensure HRSE 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, use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help. (See our inclusion policy).

**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. Parents/carers will be informed by parent mail / dojo when the more sensitive aspects of HRSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children’s learning. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school’s HRSE programme to meet their child’s needs. 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 Mrs Smith. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning. We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

**Responsibility for teaching the programme:**

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with all class teachers who will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the HRSE 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.

**Enrichment:**

Our school will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of HRSE. 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 our 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.

The Head teacher, Mrs Smith, 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 HRSE Co-Ordinator, Mrs Summerson. Mrs Summerson has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead for HRSE and the provision of in-service training. (They may be supported by the curriculum deputy and the member of staff with responsibility for child protection). All Staff HRSE 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 HRSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching HRSE. All staff have been included in the development of this policy and how it relates to them.

**Relationship to other policies and curriculum subjects:**

This HRSE 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 (such as, Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc) Pupils with particular difficulties whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of pupils. Learning about HRSE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the HRSE action plan.

**Children’s questions:**

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which HRSE 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. Our School Council system supports this.

**Controversial or Sensitive issues:**

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of HRSE. 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 HRSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, help to create a supportive climate for discussion. Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child or young person’s questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

**Supporting children and young people who are at risk:**

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which HRSE takes place. Effective HRSE 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, Mrs Smith / Mrs Taylor.

**Confidentiality and advice**

All lessons, especially those in the HRSE 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., parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

The HRSE Co-ordinator, Mrs Summerson, 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 before amending the policy.

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by Mrs Jane Summerson

To be reviewed again in September 2025