



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Relationships and Health Education Policy

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: November 2018
Last reviewed on:	19 th March 2024	
Next review due by:	March 2026	

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School builds God's kingdom here and now by being:

- **A welcoming school**

where everyone cares for and respects each other

- **A learning school**

which inspires creativity and challenges through guidance and encouragement all members of the community to learn and aim to be the best they can be.

- **A vibrant school**

which celebrates its variety and creativity and seeks to meet the needs of each person by working together in this ever-changing world

- **A holy school**

where prayer and worship are valued and we the community serve as a living witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ

LOVE LEARN BELIEVE

1. Defining Relationships and Health Education (RHE)

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.

At St. Joseph’s, the focus will be 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. This would include the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

2. Rationale

‘I have come that you might have life to the full.’ (John 10:10)

The following policy refers to Relationships and Health Education at St. Joseph’s Catholic Primary School.

We define RHE as learning about caring friendships, families and people who care for me, respectful relationships, online relationships, being safe, growing up and puberty.

Sex Education is covered in RHE as well as the National Science Curriculum. Sex education is defined in this policy as the scientific process of how a baby is conceived and born. The dignity of the human body and the self is central to our teaching of RHE.

RHE provides an excellent forum to provide pupils with life-skills that will enable them to make informed decisions and protect themselves against harmful and exploitative situations. RHE is therefore a tool to safeguard children.

RHE contributes to the foundation of PSHE and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development and offers a valuable vehicle for promoting equality between individuals and groups. It involves an exploration of human and social diversity, and a fostering of self-worth whilst recognising, accepting and respecting differences.

Aspects of RHE are taught as an integral part of our school’s PSHE provision throughout the primary school from Reception to Year 6. In this way, children are able to develop their ideas, knowledge and skills gradually and appropriately in a non-threatening environment.

We are involved in RHE 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 RHE 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. RHE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

All RHE 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 and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values. This will include using images and examples from a range of different families that exist within our community and society at large and dealing sensitively with all differences.

Relationships and Health Education and Ofsted

The 2019 Ofsted framework states that pupils should be able to recognise online and offline risks to their well-being – for example, risks from criminal and sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, substance misuse, gang activity, radicalisation and extremism – and making them aware of the support available to them. It also states that schools should ensure they are developing pupils' age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships through appropriate relationship and sex education.

The 2019 Ofsted framework also states:

'From September 2019, schools are able to follow a new relationships and sex education and health education curriculum. From September 2020, they will be required by law to follow it. Primary-age children must be taught about positive relationships and respect for others, and how these are linked to promoting good mental health and well-being. In addition, sex education will become mandatory at secondary level. If a school is failing to meet its obligations, inspectors will consider this when reaching the personal development judgement.'

Moral and Values Framework

The Relationships and Health Education Policy will be sensitive towards the established morals and values framework of all the major world religions and philosophies. The RHE policy will be complimentary with the Religious Education Policy of our school and also complimentary of the safeguarding policy.

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.

3. Statutory Requirements

Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Further guidance is available for schools in The Equality Act 2010 and school's advice. The DfE guidance states that schools should pay particular attention to the Public sector equality duty (PSED).

Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects.

As a maintained primary school, we must provide RHE to all pupils as per Section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. We are not required to provide sex education, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. Our school also delivers sex education as part of RHE. Parents can withdraw from sex education lessons (see section 9).

In teaching RHE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we teach RHE as set out in this policy.

4. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, staff and governors. The steps taken to review the policy are as follows.

The Department for Education and Ofsted have clearly outlined aspects of RHE that are statutory in all primary schools, therefore some recommendations or comments made during the consultation process may not be reflected in the final policy as our school has to ensure we are meeting statutory guidelines.

1. Review – members of SLT reviewed the existing policy as well as local and national guidance for RHE. They then reviewed the RHE policy reflecting any advice and changes at local and national level.

2. Staff consultation –Teaching staff attended RHE staff meetings where the programme was explained and reasons given for the need to update the former programme. All staff were sent the draft policy and were then invited to comment on the policy and make suggestions/amendments.

3. Parent consultation – During the Spring 2024 parent evenings, parents were able to attend a presentation on Ten Ten’s Life to the Full programme. Parents were also consulted using an online survey. The results of the survey helped to inform the policy draft and also identified additional work that was needed with parents to raise their awareness and knowledge of RHE in our school. Parents were then given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the policy and offer comments/suggestions.

4. Pupil consultation – We consulted with pupils via the Health Related Behaviour Survey. The results of this survey were then used to inform the policy and inform the delivery of RHE in our school.

5. Governor consultation - Governors were consulted on this policy via a governor meeting. All governors were sent the draft policy in advance of the meeting and were then invited to comment on the policy and make suggestions/amendments.

6. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified. The policy was then ratified by the governing body.

This policy will be reviewed every two years. This policy will be next reviewed in March 2026.

5. Aims and Objectives

At St. Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, we commit to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RHE 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 to work 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.

The aim of this policy is to enable the effective planning, delivery and assessment of RHE by:

- Developing pupil confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships;
- Teaching the use of correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies;

- Preparation for puberty and basic changes which take place during puberty;
- Developing an understanding of how to keep bodies healthy and clean;
- Developing an understanding of how to keep themselves and their bodies safe;
- Developing individual self-respect, confidence and empathy;
- Developing understanding of healthy friendships;
- Providing a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Fostering respect for the views of other people
- Instilling respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others;
- Celebrating the gift of life-long, self-giving love;
- Helping pupils understand the importance of marriage and family life and fidelity in relationships.

To develop the following personal and social skills by:

- 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 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.

6. Equal Opportunities

We at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School believe that RHE should meet the needs of all pupils. Our school is committed to the provision of RHE to all pupils and the differing needs of boys and girls. All staff are expected to give every pupil the chance to experience, participate and achieve the understanding of RHE. Equal time and provision will be allocated for all groups but there may be occasions where children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) are given extra support.

The school will ensure RHE 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 (including cyberbullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help.

The planning and organising of teaching strategies will be reviewed to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged.

7. Delivery of RHE – content, delivery and training

Content -

Three aspects of RHE - 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 education curriculum.

RHE is taught through our life-style in school and through the subjects of Religious Education, PSHE, Science and by way of a cross-curricular, integrated approach.

RHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Our school uses the Ealing PSHE scheme of work and Ten Ten's 'Life to the Full' to deliver RHE and PSHE. Biological aspects of RHE are taught within the science curriculum.

The main aspects of RHE are covered in the summer term as part of PSHE. However, many aspects of keeping safe, good and bad touch, healthy friendships, online safety, peer pressure, saying no, the PANTS rule, families and people who care for me are taught throughout the school year to ensure a consistent spiralling approach to keeping safe.

RHE focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me;

- Caring friendships;
- Respectful relationships;
- Online relationships;
- Being safe.

The above points are covered in an age appropriate way from EYFS to Year 6. These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

The changing adolescent body (puberty) is covered in years 4, 5 and 6. It is covered at this age to ensure children are prepared for the emotional and physical changes that will happen during puberty. Puberty is part of the statutory Health Education curriculum.

Sex education is covered in year 6 only. These lessons focus on the scientific process of how a baby is conceived and born. Parents may choose to withdraw their child from these sessions if they wish.

Delivery

Relationships Education is delivered by a member of school staff, usually the child's class teacher. Most lessons are delivered in mixed gender groups other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups.

Relationships Education will be assessed as part of the wider PSHE curriculum. The staff is aware that views around RHE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RHE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion.

Both formal and informal RHE questions arising from pupils are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Leader Child Protection Lead if they are concerned.

The following are protocols teachers follow for discussion ('Ground Rules'):

- No one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question;
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
- Only correct/agreed names for body parts will be used;
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way;
- The use of a question box may help to lessen embarrassment of asking questions;

- Teachers may use their discretion in responding to questions and may say (for example):
 - The appropriate person to answer that question is your parent;
 - The question can be discussed one to one after class;
 - The topic will be covered at a later stage in their RHE;

The RHE and PSHE leaders alongside the senior leadership team (SLT) are the members of staff who monitor the implementation of RHE, this monitoring is done through book scrutiny, lesson drop-ins, pupil voice and staff feedback. RHE is assessed and evaluated through Ten Ten's 'Life to the Full' scheme of work.

Training

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 a RHE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RHE. 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.

The staff is trained on the delivery of RHE as part of their continuing professional development during staff meetings. The headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or the health improvement team, to provide support and training to staff teaching RHE.

8. Child Protection

There may be rare occasions when a teacher is directly approached by a primary aged child who is sexually active, contemplating sexual activity and/or is being sexually abused. With respect to child abuse and protection procedures, staff will follow the school's child protection policy. Staff will also be referred to the DfE's 2023 document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f0a68ea78c5f000dc6f3b2/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf) statutory guidance for schools and colleges and the document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cb4349a7ded0000c79e4e1/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

9. Working with Parents

As a school, 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 and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more.

Parents will be informed about the RHE during the summer term, as part of information provided on what their children will be learning. The school will share resource with parents through:

- The school website
- Newsletter
- Letters
- TenTen parent portal

We encourage parents to discuss RHE with the headteacher, PSHE lead or the child's class teacher and are invited to view materials through the parent portal. This policy will be available on the school website for parents.

Right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from statutory RHE lessons. Parents also cannot withdraw their children from the statutory National Science Curriculum.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education (taught in year 6 only) within RHE. Requests for withdrawal from these lessons should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher.

In the event of a child being withdrawn from a lesson, that child must stay in school and will be assigned to another class until that specific lesson is over.

If you withdraw your child from sex education lessons, the school cannot guarantee that your child will not hear about the content of lessons from other pupils e.g. on the playground, walking home from school. By withdrawing children from sex education lessons, they may seek the information from elsewhere e.g. friends, siblings, the internet. These sources of information are often incorrect and unreliable and can expose children to information which is not appropriate for their age.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body will approve the RHE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RHE.

Staff

The staff is responsible for:

- Delivering Relationships Education in a sensitive way;
- Modelling positive attitudes to Relationships Education;
- Monitoring progress;
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

All teaching staff, including cover teachers, will deliver RHE lessons where appropriate.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RHE and, when discussing issues related to RHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.