



**Shining with love, pride and
success**



Human Relationships and Sex Education Policy

**St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary
School**

St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School, Gamull lane, Preston, Lancashire
Headteacher: Mrs Rich
Chair of Governors: Mrs Anne-Marie Hughes
Date of last ratification by Governing body: Summer term 2021
Date of next review: Summer term 2023
Date submitted to Diocese of Lancaster Education service: April 2021

1. Introduction.

This is a policy based on advice provided by the Diocese of Lancaster Education Service 2019. It aims to set out the policy our school will follow in teaching Human Relationships and Sex Education to our pupils (HRSE). This educational area will mainly be taught as a part of our PSHE scheme of work. Parts of this subject area may also be taught via our science curriculum.

2. Vision and Mission.

School Mission Statement

We all celebrate Jesus' life and love for everyone.
We all work together to do our best in a happy and peaceful place where everyone tries to be kind, helpful and caring.

School Vision

By reflecting the principles of the Catholic Faith we at St. Maria Goretti aim to celebrate the uniqueness of each child and through high expectations enable all our children to reach their full potential and become happy, confident and successful individuals.

Vision for Human Relationships and Sex Education.

^[1]_[SEP]At St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School we are inspired by Jesus to be the very best we can be. We look after one another and show respect and love through our relationships with one another. Jesus is invited into our hearts. In the Beatitudes, Jesus invites us to lead a full life with him by explaining what makes people blessed or happy. This is about understanding how loving our neighbour enables us to be happy too. Therefore, having a good relationship with ourselves and the other people in our lives makes us grow and flourish and we respect that everyone is a unique and beautiful part of God's creation. We are all children of God, called to grow in love for him through the person of Jesus Christ and to spread the Good News through the action of the Holy Spirit.

3. Procedures

The following groups have been consulted as part of producing this policy. The policy will be updated and reviewed regularly.

- staff^[1]_{SEP} - staff meetings during summer term 2016 and 2021
- governing body – Autumn term 2016 and Summer term 2021
- ^[1]_{SEP} - parents – via a newsletter Autumn term 2016 and website Summer 2021
- Diocesan Education Service – sent copy of the policy Summer term 2021

In consultation with the Governing Body, the policy was first implemented in Autumn term 2016, and reviewed every two years, by the Head teacher, HRSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and school Staff. The next review date is Summer Term 2023.^[1]_{SEP} The policy will be circulated to all members of the Governing Body and all members of staff. The school prospectus will contain a statement about HRSE teaching and details of where to obtain a full copy of the policy upon request. The Education Service will be sent a copy of the school's HRSE policy and it is the duty of the Governing Body to ensure that this is up to date.

4. Rationale

As a primary school in the Diocese of Lancaster Education Service, we use the term Human Relationships and Sex Education (HRSE) as it believes that relationships education is about all aspects of growing a fulfilled and happy life, sexual education is a dimension of this greater whole. For example,

The defining belief of Christianity is that God took on human form. This endows the human form with an extraordinary dignity that goes beyond that of all other forms of life and shows that humanity alone can embrace this relationship with God. Therefore, our relationship with our own bodies is not casual but infused with the Holy Spirit. Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in school must be rooted in this belief which is expressed in the Church's teaching about relationships, marriage, sex and family life. The Church offers education to young people as it is part of complete human formation. Education about human love is no less a part of a Catholic schools' responsibility than teaching about mathematics or English. At St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School we teach young people about how to form relationships, including understanding loving relationships and acknowledging that children's first experience of love is in the home. We encourage children from the earliest age to recognise that they are all children of God and that each person shares a God given dignity. As children mature, we

encourage them to follow the example of Jesus and live lives inspired by the Gospel virtues, enabling them to follow His commandment to “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Mark 12:31). This is the basis for all relationships in our school. Teaching about relationships in our schools is supported by Christian virtue teaching as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in line with ‘Fit for Mission? Schools’.

The Department for Education (2000) suggests that sex and relationship education should build on the children’s own experiences, be sensitive to the specific domestic contexts the children come from, form attitudes and values towards relationships, develop personal and social skills and increase the knowledge and understanding of each young person as they grow about their relationships and well-being, including sexual health. The Diocese of Lancaster supports all these aims in educating about relationships and sex education though recognises that the Church’s objectives in this are about complete human formation.

5. Statutory framework.

The **statutory framework** that surrounds education about human relationships largely falls within three key areas.

^[L]_{SEP} The National Curriculum (2014)

^[L]_{SEP} Statutory Guidance: ‘Sex and Relationships Education Guidance’ (2000)

• The Children’s Act (2004)^[L]_{SEP}

The main aspects of these documents which apply to our school at primary level are as follows:

The National Curriculum (2014) Science programme of study:

- The growth and development of humans, including changes experienced in puberty.
- Main body parts and how to keep them healthy.
- Life cycles of mammals, amphibians, insects and birds.
- Process of reproduction in some plants and animals.

Statutory Guidance: Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (2000)

- Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It should not be delivered in isolation. It should be firmly rooted within the framework for PSHE and the National Curriculum ^[L]_{SEP}

- Pupils should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. (However) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.
- Schools should ensure that pupils are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age^[SEP] and cultural background of the pupils concerned.

Additionally, **non-statutory guidance** directs policy and guides the work of OFSTED as it seeks to promote what is perceived as best practice. The main non-statutory guidance documents which are pertinent to our school are listed below:

Whole Curriculum	Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based* and which ^[SEP] promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society. They must also prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education	Department for Education: All schools should make provision for PSHE, drawing on best practice. Schools are free to develop their own PSHE programme to reflect the needs of their pupils.

6. Virtues and Values

Gospel virtues and values underpin the HRSE curriculum. The Christian tradition describes behaviours or habits that lead to happiness, human flourishing and a closer relationship with God as virtues. These virtues are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and fall into two groups. The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (sometimes love is used instead) are about developing the habits of being open to the work of the Holy Spirit and developing a deeper relationship with God through living a balanced and happy, good life. The cardinal virtues of practical wisdom (prudence), justice, fortitude and temperance help people develop habits of reason, fairness, emotional resilience and self-mastery. They are human virtues and, as such, are part of the development of people of all faiths or none as they learn how to flourish, thrive and to have a life supported by strong and caring relationships. The cardinal virtues are drawn from the teachings

of Plato and Aristotle and are held in common with people of many faiths and secular beliefs. St. Thomas Aquinas attributes the theological virtues as having their foundation in God, they complete the cardinal virtues and are the way people can reach “the abundant life” (John 10:10).

At St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School we live out the Gospel values shared in the Beatitudes. The teachers model Gospel values and virtues as much as possible and the children are encouraged to do the same via our RE lessons, worship times and PSHE lessons, meaning that they progress in knowledge about moral behaviour throughout their time at school.

The children are encouraged to pray to God, and to care about other people the way that Jesus cared for others. They are also encouraged to evaluate their behaviour and give reasons for the choices they have made.

As pupils progress through Key Stage Two they develop a deeper understanding of what is moral behaviour and are able to say why this is important for personal happiness and for a closer relationship with God.

7. The Aim and Objectives of HRSE.

The aim of HRSE is part of our aim to educate the complete human person. This is expressed in *Fit for mission? Schools* (2009).

The fundamental needs of the human person are the focus of Catholic education – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual, and eschatological (Our eternal destiny). These fundamental needs can only be truly fulfilled through a rich and living encounter with the deepest truths about God and the human person.

This is why Christ and His Gospel must be the foundation of the educational project of each school and college, because He is ‘the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest^[SEP] perfection’ (Congregation for Catholic Education, The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School). Therefore, the Catholic school or college is called to keep the Gospel whole and alive amongst pupils, families, and staff.

HRSE should deepen the following areas of understanding.

- To develop self-respect and love of self.
- To invite young people to develop and deepen a loving

relationship with God.

- To invite young people to understand that their life has a purpose.
- To invite young people to develop and deepen relationships with each other based on mutual respect and care and to understand this can be an expression of God's love.
- To foster an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church about how to live a full life, a life of virtue, and the place of human sexuality in living a full life, marriage and parenthood.
- A strong awareness of their own safety and the nature of consent.
- To have an understanding of the law in England about Equality and Marriage, appropriate to age and maturity.

HRSE in this school will aim to develop attitudes, personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- *We will seek to develop attitudes of responsibility towards ourselves and others, recognising the dignity in all.* [L] [SEP]
- *We will seek to enable children to understand the choices they make and how they can help or harm themselves and others.* [L] [SEP]
- *We will encourage children to learn about expressing their own emotions and being respectful of the emotions and behaviours of others.* [L] [SEP]
- *We will encourage everyone in the school to recognise their part in the school family and work together for reconciliation when relationships in the school falter.* [L] [SEP]
- *We will encourage everyone in the school to value humility, mercy and compassion and to respond with empathy to the problems of others.* [L] [SEP]
- *We will develop children's knowledge of when to say 'no' to behaviours or attitudes that harm their dignity or the dignity of others and to be responsible for their own safety.* [L] [SEP] [SEP]

- *We will teach children about the media and their choices, about what to watch, what games to play, what rules apply and that the dignity of all does not just apply to people who are physically seen, it applies to online relationships too.* [L] [SEP]
- *We will support children when relationships in their lives are challenging and teach them that there are people in school who will listen if they are experiencing changes that make them frightened or uncomfortable.* [L] [L] [L] [SEP] [SEP]
- *We will sensitively share the Church's teaching about the importance of marriage and family life as a way to live in loving relationships with others and with God.* [L] [SEP]

We will encourage children to understand difference and be mindful of people who are vulnerable to discrimination because of their personal or cultural characteristics.

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8. Inclusion [L] [SEP]

At St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School we identify that young people mature in different ways. Our teaching about relationships and sexuality is respectful of each child's starting point, their faith, culture and sexual orientation. Lessons are framed by this understanding and young people encouraged to respect difference and develop an approach of dialogue. [L] [SEP]

The school offers additional support to individuals and families via our Family support worker, our Learning Mentor, our SEN Teacher and when required will contact or direct parents or pupils towards the correct support agencies.

[L] [SEP] 9. Equality [L] [SEP]

The governing body has wide obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and will work to ensure that St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School endeavours to do its best for all of the pupils, irrespective of ability (physical and mental), race, ethnicity, nationality, maternity, pregnancy, sex, gender identity or orientation or whether they are looked after children. [L] [SEP]

Our school's approach to equality is further explained in our equality statement. (Available on the school website) [L] [SEP]

10. Programme of study

Our school uses a programme of study created by The Diocese of Lancaster for its family of schools. The programme ranges from ages 2-19 years and provides suggested areas of study and outcomes for the young people it serves. This programme is taught in discreet PSHE lessons, in cross curricular lessons, particularly R.E. and science and fundamentally embedded in the ethos of the school through assemblies, classroom discussions and school events. The programme of study is based on the teachings of the Church and aims to help young people develop their sense of purpose and character. It is taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and allows children to express alternative beliefs and viewpoints where they hold such views.

The programme of study is supported by various published resources, some of these are listed below:

BBC Active – Sex and Relationship Education

Barnardo's – Real Love Rocks

DfE - SEAL Resource (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)

NSPCC – PANTS resource

A wide range of teaching strategies are used, such as group discussions, debates, dilemma and advice activities etc. A routine of clear ground rules for discussions are established before sessions take place. Parents are informed prior to HRSE lessons taking place and lessons always take account of the school's safeguarding policy.

11. Parents

The Church recognises parents as the first educators of their children. Our school supports parents in this task. The role of the school should be that of assisting and completing the work of parents, furnishing children and adolescents with an evaluation of “*sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God*”. (Educational Guidance in Human Love (1983) Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education n69) Children's first experience of relationships and love are in the home. At our schools we seek to work with parents and support them as their children grow and begin to develop their own character as well as experiencing changes in their physical appearance. **Parents**

have been consulted about this policy before it was ratified by the governing body via a newsletter.

Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their children from HRSE lessons, however, they are not able to withdraw their children from statutory science lessons. Parents are reminded of this in the teacher's letter sent out prior to these HRSE lessons taking place. Should parents wish to withdraw their child(ren) they are informed that must contact the headteacher no later than the start of the school day when the lesson will take place.

The school will involve and support parents in learning about HRSE by suggesting useful websites in their class newsletters and via the school website.

Information about HRSE is contained in the school prospectus and the majority of the programme of study is developed through the ethos of the school. However, at times, areas of particular sensitivity, such as puberty, will benefit from additional parental support and at such times, letters will sent home and parents being given the option of coming into school to discuss the content of HRSE lessons with their child's teacher.

12. Teaching HRSE

The PSHE coordinator is responsible for the leadership, co-ordination and monitoring of HRSE in our school. This subject area is also monitored by the school leadership team and the curriculum governor. The subject will be taught by class teachers class teachers but may be supported in this by other agencies, e.g. school nurse, 10:10 theatre company etc. Such visitors will be guided to read the protocol for visitors at St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School and must agree to follow its instruction.

All staff are aware of their responsibility in fostering attitudes, living Gospel virtues and shaping behaviour based on a Christian understanding of how to lead a good life. Staff are called to be role models of the school's ethos in their relationships with other staff members, their conduct towards parents and their care for the children in the school. Staff who are not Catholic themselves must conduct their behaviour in school in accordance with the vision and mission of the school.

13. Supporting children and young people deemed to be at risk.

Sensitive subjects in HRSE are always framed so that the young people who are participating know that there is pastoral support if any of the issues discussed make them feel the need to talk further or share confidential information. This is done within the safeguarding framework of the school. Staff teaching HRSE have taken part in safeguarding professional development. Questions asked by students that are a cause for concern for the teacher, for example because of their explicit or graphic content, are addressed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and confidentiality procedures. (Available on the school website)

14. Sensitive Issues requiring Special Consideration – Dealing with difficult questions

Sensitive subjects in our HRSE lessons are framed so that the young people who are participating know that there is pastoral support if any of the issues discussed make them feel the need to talk further or share confidential information. This is done within the safeguarding framework of our school. Staff teaching HRSE are given up to date safeguarding professional development regularly.

Our school provides opportunities for the children to talk honestly and openly. At the same time we recognise that our school has to respect the pace of children's maturation. Consequently, it is felt that some topics are best postponed until the secondary school years. The following is a break-down of what areas are taught directly, and which areas are not to be taught.

- Topics included in the growing up and relationships education program:
 - Changes in the body related to puberty (hair growth, periods, voice breaking, body shape changing etc).
 - How a baby is conceived and born.
 - Feelings, relationships and values relating to puberty (such as respecting themselves and others).
 - The importance of a secure family life for bringing up children.
 - Staying safe.
 - Stereotypes e.g. gender bias.
 - Pornography (e.g. what to do if some appears on their computer)
 - Grooming (e.g. in internet chat rooms)
- Topics not taught directly, only in answer to children's questions:
 - Abortion
 - Miscarriage

- Contraception
 - Homosexuality
 - HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases
 - Rape
 - Prostitution
 - Masturbation
- Topics not to be taught or discussed in class:
 - Incest
 - Oral sex
 - Forms of sexual intercourse/foreplay
 - Exploitative or violent sexual practices

If a child asks a question on any topic listed as not to be taught or discussed, teachers will explain that this is a matter not dealt with in school, and that the child should consult his/her parent for an answer. The school will normally seek to inform parents when such a question is asked. Questions asked by students that are a cause for concern for the teacher, for example because of their explicit or graphic content, will be addressed in accordance with our school's safeguarding policy and confidentiality procedures.