



## **Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education Policy**

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education. We set out our rationale for and approach to RSE and health education in school.

The following groups have been consulted in the process of reviewing the curriculum and provision for RSE:

- School council – Summer 2025
- Parents/carers – Summer 2025
- Consultation with outside support agencies – Locala and Ten, Ten – Annually
- School governors – Summer 2025

### **Implementation and Review of Policy**

Implementation of the policy began after consultation with the Governors in the summer term 2021. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head teacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and the Staff. The next review date is Spring 2027.

### **Dissemination**

This policy will be given to all staff members and governors. It will be available to view on the policy section of the one drive and to parents via the website.

### **Defining Relationship and Sex Education**

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”<sup>1</sup>. It is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of her or himself 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 Edmund Arrowsmith we believe our role is to support parents and carers in the education of young people in these matters. It is our aim that through the teaching of RSE pupils have a sound understanding of their dignity as an individual and can appreciate and respect the dignity of others in nurturing relationships of all kinds.

### **Statutory Curriculum Requirements**

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. In addition, the Relations Education, Relationships and Sex and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make RSE compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.<sup>2</sup>

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE and health education go further.

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1. Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 4  
2. As above Page 19

## Rationale

**“God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God and God lives in Him.”** 1 John 4:16

At St Edmund Arrowsmith we believe in the unique dignity of all persons made in the image and likeness of God, this belief underpins all aspects of learning in our school. Our approach therefor is rooted in the Church’s teaching and taught within the framework of Christian moral ideals. We believe that relationships education must come before sex education as the former should frame the teaching of the latter.

RSE 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. 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.

## Aim of RSE and the Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement, “Prepare the way of the Lord through ACTIONS” commits us to educate the whole child and to foster an appreciation of the importance of aspiring to be your best, showing commitment in all that you do, Using your God given Talents, inspiring others and making the world a better place, working hard to overcome challenges in life, nurturing positive relationships and dedicated service to God and school. It is in this spirit that we commit ourselves to work in partnership with parents, to provide our pupils with a “positive and prudent sexual education”<sup>3</sup> which is both emotionally and cognitively age appropriate and rooted in Catholic teaching.

## 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.

## **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.

## **What pupils should know by the end of secondary school:**

### **Families**

Pupils should know:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status – for example, that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, this includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

## **Online and media**

Pupils should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- the impact of viewing harmful content
- that specifically sexually explicit material, for example pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

## **Being safe**

Pupils should know:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn, in all contexts, including online

## **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

Pupils should know:

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

## **The Law**

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example: -

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

## **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. Lessons will also help children 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**

Current regulations and guidance from CES and DfE state that under the Equalities Act 2010 our school will ensure and strive 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.

## Programme of Study/Resources

Appendices to this policy provide further information about the programme of study and resources used: Our whole school audit outlining coverage across departments and Key Stages and RSE Scheme of Work delivered through the Religious Education Department to Year 9 pupils.

Teaching strategies will include:

- Establishing ground rules
- Discussion in pairs, groups and whole class
- Project learning
- Reflection
- Experiential
- Film and video
- Group work
- Values clarification

Pupils' learning will be assessed in the following ways:

1. Where learning takes place during KS3 pupils will be assessed using the established routines and procedures of the school: through class discussions, book work and any specific homework that may be set. Feedback will be both written and verbal.
2. Where learning takes place in year 9 as part of the main program of study pupils will complete an assessment as part of the summative assessment programme in the summer term
3. At KS4 by using the assessment criteria of the various exam boards and specifications that are relevant.

## Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers 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/carers will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents will be consulted before this policy is ratified by the governors. They will be consulted about the development of the RSE programme as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. Our aim is that parents/carers will have confidence in our RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents/carers ***have the right to request that their child be withdrawn*** from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, except elements which are required by the National curriculum for Science. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships or Health Education. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Headteacher. Whilst acknowledging a parent's right to withdraw their child from elements of sex education we believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

## Balanced Curriculum

Whilst promoting Catholic values 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. Pupils will receive clear scientific information as well as learning about relevant aspects of UK law pertaining to RSE. We will ensure 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 RE, Science and PDC departments. Some elements may be taught through the Pastoral Curriculum delivered by form tutors. However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values of the RSE programme. They will be role models of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and pupils.

### External Visitors

Our school will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions.

Health professionals should follow the 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.

## **Other Roles and Responsibilities Regarding RSE**

### Governors

- draw up the RSE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers
- ensure that the policy is available to parents
- ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g., SEN, the ethos of the school and our Catholic beliefs
- ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children
- establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used
- ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE.

### Headteacher

The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, Diocesan Schools' Service and the LEA.

### PSHE/RSE Co-ordinators

The co-ordinator with the Headteacher has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSE and the provision of in-service training.

### 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. Where needed appropriate training will be made available for staff teaching RSE.

## Children's Questions

Governors and teachers wish to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. We want to ensure children can ask questions freely and be confident that their questions will be answered. Our aim is to make sure children will be free from bullying or harassment from other pupils.

## Controversial or sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. 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 RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

Some questions may raise issues that it would not be appropriate to answer during ordinary class time, in such instances the member of staff will take the necessary steps to deal with the question in a sensitive way.

## 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 Catholic 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., Head of Year, Pastoral Deputy Head teacher.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE co-ordinator 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 will 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.



Policy reviewed and approved at the FGB Meeting held on: 22/06/2021

Policy reviewed and approved at the QEC Meeting held on: 30/01/2024  
17/06/2025

Signed:  Chair of Governors

Signed:  Headteacher