



Policy on Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

**St John's Catholic Primary School
2021/2022**

This policy was adopted September 2021

This policy will be reviewed September 2025

Foreword from Bishop Richard Moth



“The Church as a mother is under an obligation to provide for its children an education by virtue of which their whole lives may be inspired by the spirit of Christ.”¹

These words, from Decree of the Second Vatican Council on Education, speak of the motivation for our Catholic schools. Our schools are places where the relationship with Christ, to which all are called, enables those we educate to take their place in the Church and Society conscious of their dignity as children of God.

Our schools provide the “principal means of helping parents to fulfil their role in education.”² In entrusting their children to our schools, parents provide them with the best possible start in life, grounded in the deepening of their faith through prayer and the recognition of the presence of God in all things.

Our belief in the unique dignity of the human person as made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in our Catholic schools. To this end, RSE is rooted in the Catholic Church’s teaching of the human person and firmly embedded in the Religious Education framework as it is concerned primarily with nurturing the human wholeness of our pupils.

I am pleased to commend this RSE policy to you and am confident you will find it both invaluable and reassuring as you prepare for the new academic year.

With every Blessing,



¹ VATICAN II, Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* on Christian Education, n.3. (GE)

² Code of Canon Law, c. 796§1.

1 Introduction

This policy has been written in accordance with our school Mission Statement which aims to provide a stimulating and relevant curriculum so that each individual can reach their full potential and create a safe working environment where there is mutual respect and trust amongst everyone.

Catholic schools, like all other schools in England, are required to produce a bespoke written policy in consultation with parents/carers, following the guidance issued by the Department for Education on Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), there is no requirement to produce a separate policy for Health Education.

We acknowledge that Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship, as well as Relationship Sex and Health Education (RSHE), are all underpinned by a theology of relationship and are all encompassed in the title 'Relationships and Sex Education' (RSE).

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. 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. 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 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. It is centered 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.

Aim of RSE

St John's Catholic Primary School is committed 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. Furthermore, as a school 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.

The RSHE programme aims:

- To encourage pupils' growth in self-respect, acknowledging we are all created in the image and likeness of God.
- To help pupils develop an understanding that love is the central basis of relationships.
- To help pupils to understand the nature of relationships and to encourage them to reflect on their own relationships and respect similarities and differences between people.
- To develop pupils' confidence in talking, listening, and thinking about feelings and relationships.
- To help pupils acquire the skills necessary to develop and sustain relationships.
- To offer sex education supported by the school's wider curriculum for personal, social and health education in consultation with parents/carers.
- To be able to know their body, learn the names of the main body parts and say which part of their body is associated with each sense.
- To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty and the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that adult life will bring.
- To teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies, to ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe, can protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed.
- To help pupils to develop a healthier, safer lifestyle.
- To prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom of God.
- To provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- To help pupils develop feelings of dignity, self-worth, self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- To give pupils an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.

- To create a positive culture around issues of relationships and sexuality.
- To recognise the importance of marriage and family life.
- To teach the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation (in consultation with parents/carers)

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 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;
- 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.

Delivery of RSE

We intend that the school's RSE shall be delivered with a cross curricular and integrated approach and embedded in the wider context of the school's Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Science, Citizenship, Religious Education programme (Come & See). We follow the programme approved by the Diocese called 'Life to the full.' We use resources and lesson plans from this programme across all year groups.

All pupils will be taught the significant aspects of RSE that remain as statutory elements of the National Curriculum for Science. Parents are **unable** to withdraw pupils from these statutory sessions.

Key Stage 1 (5-7)

Statutory

- identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense.
- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food and air)
- describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene.

Notes and Guidance (non-statutory)

- The focus at this stage should be on questions that help pupils to recognise growth; they should not be expected to understand how reproduction occurs. The following examples might be used: egg, chick, chicken; egg, caterpillar, pupa, butterfly; spawn, tadpole, frog; lamb, sheep. Growing into adults can include reference to baby, toddler, child, teenager and adult.
- Pupils might work scientifically by: observing, through video or first-hand observation and measurement, how different animals, including humans, grow; asking questions about what things animals need for survival and what humans need to stay healthy; and suggesting ways to find answers to their questions.

Key Stage 2 (7 – 11)

Statutory

- describe the changes as humans develop to old age.

Notes and Guidance (non-statutory)

- Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.
- Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans; by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.

Statutory

- recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

Notes and Guidance (non-statutory)

- They should be introduced to the idea that characteristics are passed from parents to their offspring, for instance by considering different breeds of dogs, and what happens when, for example, Labradors are crossed with Poodles.

Outcomes

Inclusion and Differentiation

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.

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all pupils, in particular those protected characteristics listed under the Equalities Act 2010.

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. 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/carers will be informed by letter or via SZapp 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 must be consulted before this policy is ratified by the governors. They will be consulted at every stage of the development of the RSE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE 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 discuss it with the school by contacting the Headteacher. 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. 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).

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.

Consultation that has taken place to inform this policy

Review of RSE curriculum content with staff and SLT, staff meetings and training sessions, consultation with the school governors, pre-recorded video with powerpoint to inform parents and carers and allow opportunity for feedback from them.

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the parents and governors in the Spring term 2022. This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Headteacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and Staff. The next review date is Spring 2025.

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 through the school's website and a copy is available in the school office.

Defining Relationship and Sex Education

The DfE guidance defines RSE as “lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health”. 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. The DfE identifies three main elements: “attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding”.

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 primary schools the focus should 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.

Statutory Requirements

At St John’s we must provide Relationships Education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. In teaching Relationship and Sex Education, we must have regard to Catholic Education Service guidance issued by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales 2017. The statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996, the Relationship, sex, health education document Last updated 13 September 2021 and the statutory guidance from the Department for Education Equality Act 2010.

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/resources

St John’s Catholic Primary School has agreed to follow the programme ‘Ten:Ten Life to the Full’ as recommended by the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton alongside our trained RSE Coordinator and Foundation Governor. We will use resources provided with this programme.

Teaching will be whole class, mixed gender learning, with the opportunities for a separate boys and girls forum to facilitate the needs of the individual child if necessary or requested.

Children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND) will have support in varying ways depending upon their individual needs and in consultation with their parents/carers.

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- reflection
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- drawings

Assessment

A record of each session is kept in each teacher's planning for the delivery of RSE. A portfolio of evidence from each class will be created to demonstrate the learning in each class. Individual lessons will be evaluated and assessed by the class teacher in accordance with the learning objectives for the lesson. Pupils will be given the opportunity for self-evaluation at an age appropriate level. The programme will be assessed, monitored and evaluated by the RSE Coordinator in accordance with the school's monitoring and evaluation policy.

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. 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 the teaching programme

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with the subject leader for RSHE (Alice Miles), the subject leader for Religious Education (Rachel Clough), the subject leader for Science (Ross Higginson) and the PE subject leader (Anna Dixon).

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.

External Visitors

St John's will 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.

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 Schools₅.'

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, the ethos of the school and our Christian 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 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.

PSHE/RSE Co-Ordinator

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. 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.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND CURRICULUM SUBJECTS

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the EPR/PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc)

Pupils with particular difficulties whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately adapted 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.

Children's Questions

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE 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.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be a matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church. 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. (See also Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions, Page 23 for more detail)

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. These questions will either be answered

on a 1:1 basis, referred to the parent or if Safeguarding concerns are raised it will be referred to the DSL (Finular Farr) or DDSL (Rachel Clough).

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 DSL or DDSL (Finula Farr or Rachel Clough).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE Co-ordinator (Alice Miles) 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 /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.