



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Learn, Grow, Love, Live

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy (RSHE)

Version	Date	Description of changes and person/organisation responsible
1.0	Oct 2020	New policy
2.0	Oct 2021	Updated to reflect structural changes in the school

People Responsible:	Headteacher & RSHE Lead
Committee responsible:	Governing Body
Reviewed date:	February 2023
Next review date:	February 2024

Mission Statement

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
we learn about ourselves and about the world.

We grow in faith,
we act with kindness, generosity and love
to ourselves and others.

We live life to the full and have a future full of hope.

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”¹. 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.”² This would include the topics of families and the people who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

Statutory curriculum requirements

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSHE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSHE go further.

Rationale

“As the image of God we are created for love”³

The Diocese of Clifton urges governors and headteachers of our Catholic Primary schools to play a full part in providing a suitable programme of **Relationships and Sex Education**. The work of Catholic Schools, in this area, will be informed by reflection on the Scriptures, the words and actions of Christ and the teachings of the Church. There are three important concepts which underpin any thinking on this subject:

- a) The dignity and worth of each person made in the image of God. ***“Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.”***
- b) We are called to love and be loved, ***“God is love and whoever lives in love lives in God.”***
- c) We are called to form relationships to live in community, ***“Wherever two or more of you are gathered in my name there I am.”***

Children, in our school, come from many different backgrounds. They have different life experiences, different maturation rates and different levels of sexual awareness. The pressures and influences on them from society and the media, often subliminal, will not be underestimated. The school will accompany children on the journey to adulthood, modelling for them and enabling them to become capable of whole and wholesome relationships, and discerning their calling. Above all the school will help children to understand that they are loved by God and capable of loving.

¹Please note throughout this document we refer to Relationship and Sex education as the order suggests a view of human life. We form relationships before we commit ourselves in love to another.

² [Relationships education \(Primary\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/603222/Relationships_education_Primary.pdf)

³ [Guidance Teaching Relationships and Sex Education in Schools – Clifton Diocese 2017](#)

In partnership with the Diocese of Clifton, our response to government initiatives on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) must be guided by our vision of what it means to be human and our claims to educate the whole person and the need to address issues raised by the actual experience of pupils today.

“... children and young people should be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities... they should be given a positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex.”

Aims

- 1) To engender growth in self respect and self worth, recognising that each of us is created in the image of God to give and receive love.
- 2) To explore the meaning and value of relationships and the diversity of expression.
- 3) To enable pupils to understand that love is the basis of meaningful relationships.
- 4) To enable pupils to have an understanding of themselves, their own bodies, their emotional development as they grow, mature and change.
- 5) To encourage pupils to be aware of their attitudes and values and have a sense of responsibility for themselves.
- 6) To provide an understanding of the Church’s teaching on the sacraments and how this underpins its view of relationships.
- 7) To have an understanding of and to give consideration to the beliefs, values, culture and circumstances of others and how that impacts on family life.
- 8) To explain the process of human procreation and sexuality.
- 9) To enable pupils to recognise the importance of the choices they make and that they are responsible for the decisions they take.
- 10) To understand the Church’s teaching on issues concerning human sexuality.
- 11) To help pupils recognise and resist peer, social and media pressure in relation to self image and sexuality.

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. The following virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

Programme of Sex Education

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School has consulted with staff, parents and governors in adopting a Relationships and Sex Education programme suited to the needs of our pupils.

It was agreed by all parties at Holy Cross that the school would use the Scheme of Work entitled ‘**Life to the Full**’. This programme has been adopted by a wide range of Catholic schools nationally. The Scheme of Work sets out a programme to be carried out by the class teacher in year groups of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 (YR-Y6) each academic year. The programme builds on previous knowledge and understanding to provide a firm foundation for each pupil suited to their age in an open, honest and dignified way. Members of the Samuel Partnership Schools (Clifton Diocese) met to consult on the details of this policy at its initial drafting. It will be reviewed again by all stakeholders in 2023/24.

The scheme is available for parents to view if they wish, and they are encouraged to do so prior to the delivery of the programme. An annual consultation period between parents and the school will take place at the start of each academic year.

This policy should be read alongside:

- the [Secretary of State's 2000 guidance on SRE](#) to which schools must have regard when putting together an RSHE policy and any relevant supplementary guidance;
- the [guidance on statutory & Church requirements for RSHE](#)

The policy will be used by:

- teachers who will look to it to guide their lesson planning, parents who will look to see both the RSHE curriculum content and the values the school is promoting;
- health professionals, visiting speakers and so on, who will want to know the aims, objectives and values the school's SRE promotes, agreed teaching methodologies and boundaries for their work with young people;
- partner schools, who will want to know the school's approach to RSHE so they can plan their curriculum in a way that ensures continuity of values and progression in learning;
- education staff involved in wider RSHE provision.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents

The mission of education carried out by the Church and Catholic Schools must always be carried out in accordance with the Principle of Subsidiarity i.e. the school can never replace the parents' rights. The school thus complements the work of the parents in carrying out its professional responsibility in the name of the parents.

The school, through consultation, shares information with parents regarding Relationships and Sex Education and respects the parents' right to withdraw their children from such education if they so choose but will also ensure that they are aware that:

"parents who remove their children from such instruction have a duty to give them an adequate formation, appropriate to each child or young person's stage of development"

(Pontifical Council for the Family – *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*)

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE. However, this does not apply to the content which is defined under **relationship education, health education or National Curriculum Science**. Before granting any such request, an appointment must be made with the headteacher to discuss to ensure that parents' wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Records will be kept of such meetings and discussions.

Governors

In line with current legal requirements, governors have the responsibility for ensuring there is a Relationship and Sex Education Policy, drawn up in consultation with parents and teachers, which is in keeping with Catholic teaching. If necessary, they need to provide guidelines for the teaching of sensitive issues. They must ensure that the policy is available to parents and that parents know of their right to withdraw their children. Governors must provide sufficient training and resources to see that the topic can be taught correctly, creatively and sensitively. They must ensure that the programme and the resources are monitored and evaluated. This monitoring applies to both the taught curriculum and the wider areas of school life e.g. careers, school nurse. Since all curriculum areas will impact at least indirectly on this area it is important governors provide training and inset for all staff to help them understand the Church's teaching in this area.

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.

RSHE Lead

The Lead, 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 RSHE and the provision of in-service training. (They may be supported by the curriculum lead and the member of staff with responsibility for child protection)

Teachers and staff

All adult members of the school community are role models and educators in this dimension of pupils' education. The teacher's role in particular is to; be fully inclusive of all children, value and affirm all pupils, actively promote open and wholesome relationships, develop gospel values and effective pastoral systems; and provide positive and accurate learning about relationships and sex. For teachers not directly involved in the overt teaching of Relationship and Sex Education there will be opportunities for learning, occurring in all areas of the curriculum, which will indirectly refer to this area and all teachers therefore need to be aware of the school's policy and curriculum for Relationship and Sex Education.

Teachers should advise governors on the content and the organisation of Relationship and Sex Education. They should help develop suitable procedures for dealing with requests from parents to withdraw their children from sex education lessons; contribute to reviewing existing provision and use their professional skills in developing the curriculum.

They should teach Relationship and Sex Education curriculum as detailed in the school agreed scheme of work, 'Life to the Full' and make sure their own understanding of the teaching of the church is clearly developed. Teachers need to participate in timetabling, monitoring and evaluating Relationship and Sex Education.

Pupils

All pupils have the right to be respected as a unique and unrepeatable human being created in the image of God. They have the right to receive accurate information, appropriate to their age and ability, to be able to develop spiritually and morally and to have an informed conscience and be able to make informed choices. All pupils will be helped to develop a positive attitude and sense of responsibility regarding their own and others' sexuality; to have a sense of self esteem that enables them to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility.

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

Equal Opportunities

Planning should account for the age and ability of the pupils so that all children have full access to RE. Differentiated materials and help will be provided for children with Special Educational Needs and those for whom English is an Additional Language. In our school, all are welcome and we do not discriminate.

Inclusion and differentiated learning

We will ensure RSHE 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

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.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSHE. 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 RSHE 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 (RSHE) and Health Education, [Managing difficult questions](#) Page 23.)

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.

Child Protection

All adults have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils. Staff must be aware that effective Relationship and Sex Education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSHE takes place. Effective RSHE 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 RSHE programme, will have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in

matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

Monitoring and evaluation

The RSHE Lead will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires / response sheets / needs assessment given to pupils, and / or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

Related policies and documents

Holy Cross Religious Education policy

Holy Cross Equality policy

Holy Cross Positive behaviour policy

Holy Cross Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

[Life lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools \(Education Committee Feb 2015\)](#)

[Guidance for Teaching Relationships and Sex Education in Schools \(Diocese of Clifton, April 2017\)](#)