

# St Patrick's Catholic Primary School



## Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Date: July 2024

Review Date: July 2026

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## Relationship and Sex Education Policy

*We strive for excellence within a caring and diverse community, nurturing the Catholic faith, respecting each other, living, working and growing together as part of God's family.*

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At St Patrick's we teach RSE as set out in this policy. In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE). We set out our rationale for and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

### **Policy Development<sup>1</sup>**

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a working group gathered all relevant information including relevant national guidance and guidance provided by the Catholic Education service
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents were invited to share their views on the policy via the school website.
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified. This policy will be implemented from April 2020.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Headteacher, the Governing Body and staff. The next review date is July 2026

### **Dissemination**

The draft 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. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the school's web site.

### **Definition of Relationships 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 herself or himself as a

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<sup>1</sup> This policy is based on the CES model RSE policy. See <https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/relationship-sex-education> for more information.

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”.

### **Statutory Requirements**

As a maintained primary school we must provide relationships education 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 (See Appendix 1).

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

However, as a Catholic school, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further:

### **Rationale**

‘I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL’ (John.10.10)

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 centred 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 and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

### **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.

## **Aims of Relationships and Sex Education**

We aim 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 that believes each person is made in the image and likeness of God, and encourages the development of the ‘fully alive’ person in each area of their relationships. This is carried out in the context of supporting parents as the first educators of their children.

### **Objectives:**

#### **To develop the following attitudes and virtues:**

- ☑ Reverence for the gift of sexuality;
- ☑ Respect for the dignity of every person – in their own person and in the person of others;
- ☑ Joy in the goodness of the created world and their own bodies;
- ☑ Responsibility for one’s actions and a recognition of their impact 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;
- ☑ Faithfulness 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, including 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;
- ☑ 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 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; (Parents have the right to withdraw their child from this part of the curriculum);
- ☒ How to keep themselves safe and where to go for advice.

Pope Francis :

It is not easy to approach the issue of sex education in an age when sexuality tends to be trivialised and impoverished. It can only be seen within the broader framework of an education for love, for mutual self-giving. In such a way, the language of sexuality would not be sadly impoverished but illuminated and enriched. *Amoris Laetitia*, 28

### **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. (In looking at these questions, it is important to draw links to the school's inclusion policy).

- **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.

- **Broad content of RSE**

The 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.

### **Curriculum**

We use the model Catholic Primary RSE curriculum provided by the CES. This model curriculum covers EYFS, KS1 and KS2 and is based on three core themes within which there will be broad overlap.

**The three themes are:**

• **Created and loved by God (this explores the individual)**- The Christian imperative to love self, made in the image and likeness of God, shows an understanding of the importance of valuing and understanding oneself as the basis for personal relationships.

• **Created to love others (this explores an individual's relationships with others)**- God is love. We are created out of love and for love. The command to love is the basis of all Christian morality.

• **Created to live in community – local, national & global (this explores the individual's relationships with the wider world)**-Human beings are relational by nature and live in the wider community. Through our exchange with others, our mutual service and through dialogue, we attempt to proclaim and extend the Kingdom of God for the good of individuals and the good of society.

## 1. Relationship Education

Relationships Education will put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safer relationships, including with family, friends and online. Your child will be taught what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who can support them. In an age appropriate way, your child's school will cover how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect. By the end of primary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- ☐ families and people who care for me
- ☐ caring friendships
- ☐ respectful relationships
- ☐ online relationships
- ☐ being safe

## 2. Health Education

Health Education aims to give your child the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others, and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.

By the end of primary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- ☐ mental wellbeing
- ☐ internet safety and harms
- ☐ physical health and fitness
- ☐ healthy eating
- ☐ facts about and risks associated with drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- ☐ health and prevention
- ☐ basic first aid
- ☐ changing adolescent body

## Delivery of RSE

We deliver the curriculum using the programme provided by Ten Ten called '*Life to the Full Plus*'. This also includes PSHE specific content.

The programme allows us to make Key Decisions about more controversial lessons. These Key Decisions are made by the Governing Body after consultation with parents and staff first.

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- trigger drawings
- values clarification

Pupils' learning will be assessed by the teachers throughout the lessons through questioning, discussions and written work. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

## Parents and carers

We recognise that parents/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 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 during the process of development of the RSE programme. 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' Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RSE except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum for Science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children

they are asked to notify the school in writing 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.

### **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. Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE. 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 Teaching the Programme**

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with class teachers.

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**

Our school may 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.

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**

#### **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 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.

#### **Head teacher:**

The Headteacher has overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education policy and its integration into the school's curriculum and Catholic life; and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Brentwood Diocese Education Service and the Local Education Authority or Multi-Academy Trust where appropriate, also appropriate agencies.

#### **Subject Leader for PSHE/RSE:**

The subject leader 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:**

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.

#### **Pupils:**

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

#### **Relationship to Other Policies and Curriculum Subjects**

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE and RE Journey in Love curriculum. It is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc)

Where appropriate, pupils with additional needs will receive differentiated 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.

If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

## **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. (See Sex and Relationship Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000, Department for Education and Employment, July 2000 for more information)

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.

## **Supporting Children 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 a designated member of the safeguarding team.

## **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 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. 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 circumstance they would have to inform others, e.g., child's parents, a member of the school safeguarding team, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The subject leader for RSE 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 together with the policy review. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the RSE policy.