



St Catherine's Catholic School

RSE Policy

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ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
MISSION STATEMENT



1. Aims

As a Catholic school we are committed to the education of the whole child, spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and emotional. Through this we will endeavour to raise students' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. We believe that Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is an integral part of this education, preparing our students to positively serve our society and the world by living our Gospel values. In this context we commit ourselves, in partnership with parents, to provide our students with a 'positive and prudent sexual education'¹ which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

2. Statutory Requirements

As a secondary academy school we must provide RSE to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At St Catherine's we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. This process involved the following steps

- (i) A review of the relevant information including national and local guidance and guidance provided by the Catholic Education Service and the policy of the Archdiocese of Southwark²
- (ii) Staff consultation - all school staff were encouraged to make recommendations to the policy from a subject and a pastoral perspective
- (iii) Parents were invited to respond to an online questionnaire about the policy and content of the RSE curriculum
- (iv) Student groups across the age range were consulted about what they want from their RSE
- (v) Governors were consulted about the draft drawn up following these consultations.

¹ Gravissimum Educationis

² <https://rcaoseducation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Education-in-Human-Love-Diocesan-Policy-for-Relationship-Sex-Education.pdf>

4. Rationale

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”³. It is about the development of the student’s knowledge and understanding of herself 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 Catherine’s our reasons for teaching RSE go further.

‘I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL’
(Jn.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 students. 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.

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.

³ DfE RSE statutory guidance p4

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.

5. Curriculum

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.⁴ It will enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague, prepare them for long term relationships and promote the Catholic Church's teaching on Marriage.

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced education by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints and opportunities for discussion.

Content will include:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health, contraception, and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure)

All RSE will be taught 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 own personal circumstances respected. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatization of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them.

Students will also receive clear scientific biological information as well as an understanding of the aspects of the law pertaining to topics covered in RSE including forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality. We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe and healthy and to understand their rights as individuals.

DfE statutory curriculum content is set out in Appendix 1

⁴ Ibid p25

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is more than a content-based curriculum subject. The three aspects of RSE – attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills will be provided through the taught curriculum alongside PHSE and Citizenship in timetabled lessons and on dropdown days, as well as through assemblies and Form Time. Thus there will be a whole school/ethos dimension, a cross curricular dimension and a specific relationships and sex curriculum

6.1 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 students 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 Board has 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.

(This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Equality Protocol, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy)

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board will approve the RSE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation

7.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/sex education components of RSE (see section 8).

7.3 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.

Responsibility for teaching the specific relationships and sex education programme lies with the relevant curriculum staff; this will normally include Religious Education, Science, Physical Education, Computing, English, Drama, RSE and PSHE.

However all staff will be role models for students of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and students. They will also contribute to the development of students' personal and social skills.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory sex education components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

See Appendix 4 for current staffing of the RSE curriculum

7.4 Pupils

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

At St Catherine's we want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. We want to ensure that students can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment. Staff will be conscious of this and teaching methods will ensure that students feel safe.

7.5 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. It is important that external visitors are clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Visitors must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'⁵. 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. External visitors must ensure that their presentations are mindful and respectful of Catholic teaching and practice.

⁵ CSE Checklist for External speakers to Schools 2016

and <https://rcaoseducation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Guidance-on-Visitors-and-External-Speakers-Working-with-Pupils-in-Catholic-Schools-in-the-Diocese.pdf>

8. Parents' right to withdraw

While Relationships education is a statutory requirement for all students, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory, sex education components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the student wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents.

Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as diocesan advisers, school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE will be monitored by the member of the Senior Leadership Team given delegated responsibility by the Headteacher, through planning scrutinies, learning walks, scrutinies of student work folders.

Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the member of the Senior Leadership Team given delegated responsibility by the Headteacher.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Board.

Appendix 1: Relationships and sex education curriculum map

YEAR GROUP	TERM	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS	RESOURCES
Year 7	Autumn 1	Mental Wellbeing Respectful relationships (Friendship) including on-line Being unique	Jigsaw COVID-19 recovery Programme 10:10 Year 7-8 Foundation programme 10:10 Cinema in education RE Department Art Department Curriculum
Year 7	Autumn 2	Friendship including management of conflict About Bullying Families	10:10 Year 7-8 Foundation programme Anti-Bullying alliance PSHE Association
Year 7	Spring 1	Respectful Relationships - social responsibly Online safety	10:10 Year 7-8 Foundation Ceops Orange
Year 7	Spring 2	Making choices - Healthy relationships Stereotyping and Equality Being Safe Grooming, FGM	PSHE Association 'Nia' Project Forwarduk
Year 7	Summer 1	Changing adolescent body/ puberty Personal hygiene and health	10:10 Year 7-8 Foundation programme NHS materials Science Department Curriculum Drama Department Curriculum
Year 7	Summer 2	Healthy lifestyle Basic First Aid	PSHE Association St John's Ambulance Science Department Curriculum

YEAR GROUP	TERM	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS	RESOURCES
Year 8	Autumn 1	Mental Wellbeing Retreat	Jigsaw COVID-19 recovery Programme RE Department
Year 8	Autumn 2	Changing adolescent body/puberty Respectful relationships Anti-Bullying Self Esteem	10:10 Year 7-8 Foundation Programme RE Department Curriculum (Human Dignity) PIPS Programme
Year 8	Spring 1	Mental wellbeing Recognising pressures Online safety	PSHE association Time to change Mental Health Foundation 10:10 Cinema in education
Year 8	Spring 2	Healthy lifestyle Drugs and alcohol Basic First Aid	Kenward Trust PSHE Association St John's Ambulance

YEAR GROUP	TERM	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS	RESOURCES
Year 9	Autumn 1	Mental Wellbeing	Jigsaw COVID-19 recovery Programme
Year 9	Autumn 2	Online and media Physical health and fitness Alcohol awareness	PSHE Association Dove Self-esteem PE Department curriculum
Year 9	Spring 2	Intimate relationships – making choices (I)	10:10 Year 9-11 Foundation programme 10:10 Cinema in education
Year 9	Summer 1	Intimate relationships (II)	10:10 Year 9-11 Foundation programme (cont/)
Year 9	Summer 2	Mental wellbeing Being safe Basic First Aid	PIPS Rise above Bexley Women's Aid (020 8301 1536)

YEAR GROUP	TERM	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS	RESOURCES
Year 10	Autumn 1	Mental Wellbeing	Jigsaw COVID-19 recovery Programme
Year 10	Spring 1	Intimate relationships (I)	10:10 Year 9-11 Foundation programme 10:10 Cinema in education
Year 10	Spring 2	Intimate relationships (II) Self- esteem Internet Safety and harms	10:10 Year 9-11 Foundation programme School Nurse IT Department curriculum
Year 10	Summer 1	Physical Health and fitness Drugs, alcohol and addiction Being safe: Risky behaviour	PE Department curriculum Kenward Trust PSHE Association
Year 10	Summer 2	Health and prevention ECM 3 Basic First Aid	Coppafeel St John's Ambulance

YEAR GROUP	TERM	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS	RESOURCES
Year 11	Autumn 1	Mental Wellbeing	Jigsaw COVID-19 recovery Programme
Year 11	Autumn 2	Intimate relationships (I)	10:10 Year 9-11 Foundation programme
Year 11	Spring 1	Intimate Relationships (II)	10:10 Year 9-11 Foundation programme 10:10 Cinema in education School nurse
Year 11	Spring 2	Mental Wellbeing Budgeting and debt avoidance Gambling and targeted advertising	PSHE Association