



St John's Catholic Primary School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Autumn 2018

"I am the vine, you are the branches."

Introduction

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 at St. John's Catholic Primary School. We have based our school's Relationship and Sex Education policy on the DfEE guidance (ref DfEE 0116/2000) and the 2014 supplementary guidance. We refer to Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and we place the emphasis on relationships and supporting pupils' understanding and skill in developing positive and healthy relationships. Our definition is that this work is a lifelong learning process; it is about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It involves teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health.

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.

It is our belief that RSE is the responsibility of all staff and should be an integral part of teaching and learning processes. Education for personal growth and self-esteem, including sex and health education, complements and overlaps with the personal, social and emotional development of the child and the general life of the school.

At St. John's we recognise that parents have the primary duty and right to be the first and principal educators of their children in this area. We see ourselves as supporting and helping parents to fulfil this responsibility. The attitude, beliefs and behaviour of pupils in all their relationships are primarily formed and greatly influenced by their experiences within the family and the relationship they have with their parents/guardians. RSE in school is intended therefore to supplement and complement what goes on at home.

Definition

Ofsted 2002 recommendations have informed our policy and practice, in particular: 'A caring and developmental SRE programme needs to be more than just biology and the fundamentals of reproduction. Young people want reassurance about their body image, behaviour, feelings and relationships. They also need knowledge and skills appropriate to their level of maturity and developmental needs'.

In planning and presenting our RSE programme we provide an opportunity for pupils to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment. Central to our PSHE programme is the development of pupils' self-esteem. If young people feel positive and good about themselves, they are more likely to take care of themselves, think positively of other people, and therefore develop non-exploitative, caring relationships. They are also less likely to be exploited by others.

Our policy and practice is based upon national guidance and good practice, consistent with Shropshire Council recommendations. This policy is cross-referenced and consistent with other policies; Religious Education, Safeguarding, Bullying, Equal Opportunities and Science.

Equal Opportunities

At St. John's Catholic Primary School, the notion of equality of opportunity is highly valued. The RSE curriculum should offer children the opportunity to clarify and develop their attitudes and values relating to: gender roles, stereotyping, taking into account equality issues (sex, race and culture, disability, ability, religion and sexual orientation). While we use Relationship and Sex Education to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use Relationship and Sex Education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation. We aim to help children understand that they are a unique creation of God and so are able to grow in self-respect developing a positive attitude to themselves, their feelings and their sexuality

All Relationship and Sex Education 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.

Child Protection

The Child Protection procedures as laid down by Shropshire Council will be followed. All referrals, whatever their origin, must be taken seriously and must be considered with an open mind, which does not pre-judge the situation. The procedures adopted for handling cases of neglect, physical, emotional, sexual abuse and failure to thrive involving children and young persons, are based on the principle that the interests and welfare of the child or young person are of paramount importance.

Confidentiality must not prevent action if the child is 'at risk'. Teachers will listen sympathetically to anything a child tells them in confidence. However, if a teacher feels that a child is at risk then the appropriate people will be contacted in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available for parents in school.

Moral and Values Framework

The Relationship and Sex Education Policy will be sensitive towards the established morals and values framework of all the major world religions and philosophies, but the emphasis at our school is on Catholic beliefs and attitudes. The RSE Policy is complimentary with the Religious Education Policy and the Personal, Social and Health Education Policy.

"Such education cannot be reduced simply to the giving of biological facts. Our schools have the responsibility to ensure that the information our children are given is received in the context of the Christian community and with Christian values, based on sound moral principles. We cannot be happy with an approach that reduces everything to mechanical and biological functions. We need to

bring our young people to an appreciation of true Christian values and an understanding of moral principles."

Bishops Low Week Letter 1987

The Social, Ethnic and Religious Mix of the School

We aim to fulfil the educational needs of the children who are represented in the local community. The children come from a varied cross section of the local community and represent different social, ethnic and religious values, beliefs and customs.

We aim to introduce pupils to the idea of the beauty and wonder of God's creation as expressed in life, in the human family and more particularly in God's gift of individuality, and how that individuality finds fulfilment in loving relationships.

Disability

If the school has any children with special needs who require special assistance their needs will be fully considered. Their parents will be consulted.

Whole School approach

It is our belief that RSE is the responsibility of all staff and is integral to teaching a broad and balanced curriculum, educating the whole child and adhering to the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance.

Pupils' questions will be responded to by all staff (teaching and non-teaching) as they arise in a straightforward way. Factual, simple and correct information will be provided using correct terminology for body parts and functions appropriate to the age of the child.

School staff have the right not to feel under pressure to answer difficult questions on the spot and will use distancing techniques such as referring the question to a question box. This allows time for reflection about the most appropriate way to respond. Staff have been provided with a process for responding to questions.

Any concerns arising concerning a child or any indications that a child or children are at risk of harm or in danger will be discussed with the head teacher or child protection lead in accordance with the Child Protection policy.

The use of sexualised language, swear and slang terms, including homophobic language will be addressed with pupils and as appropriate parents/carers.

Organisation

The main delivery of RSE is through PSHE, but some aspects are also taught through other subject areas such as Science and PE. It is taught by the class teacher, and where possible other members of staff to provide a gender balance, whenever possible. Work in single and mixed gender groups and small groups will be used based on learning and developmental need.

We use the Shropshire Respect Yourself: Eat Better, Move More, RSE programme. This teaches children to understand and respect themselves and their bodies as part of a healthy lifestyle approach. The RSE topic has three sections; Choices and Challenges, Changes and Care and Commitment. In Years 5 & 6 there is a greater emphasis on the changes that occur in puberty. Year 6 uses the Shropshire RSE Transition Programme. We use this alongside *A Journey in Love* which ensures that the Catholic ethos is respected throughout all RSE teaching.

Pupils are taught about relationships and encouraged to discuss issues. We teach the parts of the body, using the correct terminology, how these work and how we change as we grow. We encourage children to ask for help, providing reassurance that change is part of life's cycle.

In Science lessons in Key Stage 1 the children are taught about how humans change and grow and how a baby is born. The focus is on changes and growing, keeping our bodies and ourselves healthy and safe. For this aspect we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

Aims

RSE in our school is part of the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum. This is integrated within the wider school curriculum and complements and overlaps with the general ethos and life of the school.

To provide a planned, age appropriate scheme of work, designed to capitalise on the fascination and interest that children have about themselves, their own growth and development and to offer reassurance that such changes are normal and natural.

In planning and presenting our RSE programme we provide the opportunity for pupils to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment, following agreed ground rules. We want to reassure children of their value and self-worth including aspects of dignity, self-respect and self-restraint, help them to have a responsible attitude towards personal relationships including mutual respect and care, and to develop sensitivity towards the needs of others, providing knowledge of loving relationships and the human reproductive process.

We aim to inform children on matters of personal hygiene and related health issues, encourage exploration of values and moral issues taking into account physical and moral risks associated with certain behaviour, educate against discrimination and prejudice and help prepare children to make informed choices about relationships.

We offer a planned and appropriate scheme of work, devised to meet the following aims and objectives:

- know that they are a unique creation of God and so are able to grow in self-respect developing a positive attitude to themselves, their feelings and their sexuality
- Raise and promote positive self esteem
- Help pupils develop their skills and confidence in making decisions, communication, assertiveness, self-expression, respect for themselves and others
- Help pupils communicate and understand their feelings and emotions
- Recognise the importance of forgiveness and saying sorry in relationships
- Provide pupils with skills necessary to keep themselves happy and safe
- Prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes of growing up
- Offer opportunity for pupils to develop and clarify their attitudes and values
- Counteract myths and misinformation
- Challenge media stereotypes, oppression and prejudice and promote equal opportunities
- Explain the meaning of words in a sensible and factual way, using correct names for body parts and functions
- Understand that the difference between male and female is part of God's loving and creative plan
- Understand the Church's teaching on sexual activity outside of marriage
- Provide reassurance that change is part of the life cycle and help pupils accept variations
- Recognise and appreciate the Catholic belief in the importance of marriage for family life and the bringing up of children
- Develop the confidence to seek help, support and advice.

Right to withdraw

It is our hope that parents would wish their children to be involved in the schools positive and prudent programme of Relationship and Sex Education, following consultation regarding the school's approach. However, we recognise parents have the right to withdraw their children from such lessons (not included in National Curriculum Science) after discussion with the Head teacher.

Key Documents/information:

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Bishops Low Week Letter 1987

Respect Yourself

A Journey in Love

PSHE Association

This policy has been reviewed and updated in consultation with teaching and support staff, and approved by Governors. It will be reviewed every two years.