

# Relationship and Sex Education Policy

## St Teresa's School

### Mission Statement

Inspiring and achieving together, using our unique gifts given to us by God.

**Reviewed:** January 2019

**Review due:** January 2021

*'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 (and the Welsh Assembly Government) RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHME 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.

### Introduction

This policy responds to the requirements of the Education Act 1996, (sections 403 and 405) for schools to formulate and keep updated a policy on Relationship and Sex Education. This policy statement is underpinned by the School Mission Statement.

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". (Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, DfE, 2000) It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of herself or himself 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". (ibid)

*A Journey in Love*, McCrimmons 2008 is one of the RSE programmes specified by the Diocese of Northampton for use in Primary Schools.

## **Rationale and context for RSE**

Education in relationships, and especially in sexual relations, is first and foremost, the right and duty of the parents of each individual child. The school provision of RSE is offered to assist parents, and is not intended to replace the role of parents in this area. The Church teaches very clearly that the school's role is subsidiary to the parents' role in this matter. This means that the parents are the first educators of their children and that the parents enter into partnership with others whom they trust (in this case the Catholic school) to assist and enable them to carry out their responsibilities.

Such assistance in the field of relationships and sex education will be clearly set in the framework of Catholic Church teaching.

As a caring Catholic school, our role is to promote the development of the whole person including aspects of character such as self-esteem and responsibility. The ability to form strong, healthy, stable relationships is fostered in many different areas of the curriculum.

The school seeks to help children to reflect on the different roles and demands of family relationships. It is in the family that children first experience affection, respect, arguments, saying sorry, forgiveness and other ways of relating to others.

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 background they come from and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

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 RSE and the Mission Statement**

Our Mission Statement commits us 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, our school aims state that 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.

## **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 (including cyber-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;

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.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) 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. 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 will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme. Our aim is that every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

### Programme/Resources

In the teachers' resource, A Journey in Love, an aspect of the mystery of love is treated in each year group as follows: -

Pre-school	Wonder at God's Love
Reception	God loves each one of us in our uniqueness
Year One	We meet God's love in our family
Year Two	We meet God's love in the community
Year Three	How we live in love
Year Four	God loves us in our differences (Naming the different male and female body parts. Identify development of baby in womb)

Year Five	God loves me in my changing and development (External and internal changes which happen to boys and girls in puberty)
Year Six	The wonder of God's love in creating new life (Illustrations of the human body including male and female reproductive organs)

The class teacher will have responsibility for teaching RSE together with the Science teacher in Key Stage Two.

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- mindmaps
- discussion
- reflection
- powerpoint presentation
- group work
- role-play
- prayer

### Diocese

Guided and inspired by the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, we hold that the human person is a spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical unity. All education must be of the whole person. This Catholic school is part of a family of schools and parishes and is established in order that the education of the children in this school can be taught as an integral part of the Catholic Faith.

It is part of the duty of the Bishop of the Diocese of Northampton under the Law of the Church (CIC 796-806) to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools in his area and to ensure that the formation and education provided in such schools are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine.

It is also the duty of the Bishop and Trustees of the Diocese under Charity Law to ensure that the schools of the Diocese act in accord with the Trust Deed of the Diocese.

### Governors

The governors of this independent Catholic school acknowledge and intend to promote the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church in the fulfilment of their ecclesial and statutory duties, for the benefit of the children in their care.

They recognise that the parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children, and that parents have special rights and duties over relationships and sex education.

### Joint Head Teachers

The Joint Head Teachers take 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.

### 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. All staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

### Outside speakers; off-site elements; resources

Any RSE provision will be based in-school or in a diocesan approved centre to maintain the closest link with parents.

It is the intention that, in those circumstances where any person from outside the school is to talk to an individual pupil or group of pupils about relationships and sex education, that this is done only when parents have been informed in advance.

This policy also applies to all teaching and learning resources, such as DVDs, websites, written material, graphics etc. and any presentation/ material will be monitored to ensure that it complies.

### **Safeguarding**

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 designated senior member of staff responsible.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The school provides equal opportunities for all pupils in the area of RSE at a level appropriate to their age and understanding. Some RSE lessons will be provided for boys and girls to be taught separately in Year Five and Year Six. See also the Equal Opportunities policy.

### **Citizenship**

Education for Citizenship includes social and moral responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to learn from the very beginning, self-confidence and social and moral responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, towards those in authority and towards each other.