

# RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Chiswick

*"Living and learning, inspired by our faith"*



May 2024

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Chair of Governors

RSE Lead– Miss L Scannell

Next Review Date: May 2026

### **Mission Statement:**

*Living and learning, inspired by our faith.*

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education. We set out our rationale for and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

### **Defining Relationship and Sex Education (RSE):**

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, DfEE, 2000). It is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of him or her as a sexual being and how it affects them. The DFE identifies three main elements: “attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding.” Effective RSE programmes help learners to develop the skills and knowledge appropriate to their age, understanding and development to enable them to make responsible decisions about their relationships, sexual health and well-being.

### **Statutory Curriculum Requirements:**

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

### **Rationale:**

“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 uniqueness of the human person who is 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 faith is the Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationships 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 relationships as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

Following the guidance of Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) 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 something that will be positive and show care and consideration for the future. This will show 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. Support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

Our programme encapsulates Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to God's call to love others with a proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body.

RSE will be taught in accordance with the principles set down in other relevant school policies such as Equal Opportunities and Inclusion. The school will use the Ten Ten Resource 'Life to the Full' to deliver RSE curriculum content within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church.

### Aim of RSE:

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, 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. It is in this context that we commit ourselves:

In partnership with parents, to provide children with a "positive and prudent sexual education" (Gravissimum Educationis 1) which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

### 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 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 marriage and the importance of marriage and family life;
- the Church's teaching on relationships and the nature and meaning of sexual love;
- 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;

### Outcomes:

#### 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 and is taught in such 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 cyberbullying), 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 pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, age, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender, religion or whether they are looked after children. (As referred to in the school Equality policy/obligations)

#### Broad Content of RSE

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.

**Life to the Full** is a fully resourced Scheme of Work in Relationships Education for Catholic primary schools which embraces and fulfils the new statutory curriculum. Taught with a spiral approach to learning, in which pupils will revisit the same topics at an age appropriate stage through their school life, the programme includes teaching about personal health, physical and emotional wellbeing, strong emotions, private parts of the body, personal relationships, family structures, trusted adults, growing bodies, puberty, periods, life cycles, the dangers of social media, where babies come from, an understanding of the Common Good and living in the wider world. The entire teaching is underpinned with a religious understanding that our deepest identity is as a child of God- created chosen and loved by God. The programme is fully inclusive of all pupils and their families.

Our 'Life to the Full' programme will cover:

#### **Module 1: Created and Loved by God**

- Religious Understanding
- Me, my body, my health
- Emotional well-being
- Life cycles

#### **Module 2: Created to Love Others**

- Religious Understanding
- Personal Relationships
- Keeping Safe

#### **Module 3: Created to Live in Community**

- Religious Understanding
- Living in the Wider World

### **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 the RSE coordinator and head teacher.

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 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 any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'

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.

### **Working with Parents**

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. 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 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 have the **right to withdraw** their children from RSE except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher and RSE Lead. 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.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

#### **Governors**

In accordance with the Education Act, 1993 the governing body will keep up-to-date with the school's policy for RSE, in consultation with parents and will make copies available to them. They will make known to parents their right to withdraw their children from all or part of RSE provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory Science National Curriculum.

#### **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.

#### **RSE Co-Ordinator**

The co-ordinator - 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

#### **Teachers**

All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress; they should actively contribute to the 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.

#### **Parents**

The school recognises that parents are the prime educators of their children and will seek to support them in their task. It will ensure that parents are kept informed of what is happening in RSE in terms of content, delivery and timing.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The RSE subject leader will monitor provision of RSE in the school by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated often 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.