



Sacred Heart
Catholic Primary School

Relationships and Sex Education 2024 - 2025

Approved by:	Governing body
Status:	Statutory
Review cycle:	Annual
Last reviewed:	September 2024
Date of next review:	September 2025

1. Introduction

The ethos of Sacred Heart School is founded on Catholic, Christian principles. These principles form the cornerstone of our Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. As a result, as a maintained primary school, Sacred Heart must provide relationships education as per section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

Where non-statutory Sex Education is taught as part of the RSE curriculum, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out the rights of parents/carers to withdraw pupils from non-statutory Sex Education lessons. Under the act, parents and carers are not able to withdraw pupils from Relationships or Health Education as this is a statutory part of the curriculum.

In this policy:

- Relationships and Sex Education is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. It involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values, and is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life, for stable and loving relationships, and for respect, love and care.
- The school will look to provide information on its approach to Relationships and Sex Education, outline the curriculum and identify any non-statutory Sex Education, if taught.
- It will also identify the process that the head teacher should follow in considering a request from a parent to remove their child from these aspects of Sex Education if delivered as part of the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum.

Relationships and sex education is not a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

2. Aims

At Sacred Heart, our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and emotional) and as a school, 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, help them to recognise the value of all persons and to develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that in partnership with parents we commit to provide children and young people with a positive relationships education which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and which is rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

3. Rationale

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

As a school, we deliver 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. Therefore, our approach to RSE is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and is delivered within a positive framework of Christian ideals.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity; Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in a 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, reflecting God's beauty, and sharing in the divine creativity. Therefore, RSE will be placed firmly within the context of relationships 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 is integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of our 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, whilst learning that there are challenges that need to be understood and appreciated.

All RSE will be taught in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and family, whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Relationships and Sex Education in our school is taught with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach Relationships and Sex Education in the belief that:

- Relationships and Sex Education should be taught in the context of marriage and family life;
- It is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process;
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others;
- it is important to build positive relationships with other, involving trust and mutual respect;
- children need to learn the importance of self-control

4. Values and Virtues

Our RSE programme enshrines Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, to marriage and to 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. The following virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

5. Policy Development

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 member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE

5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the full governing body and was ratified

6. Defining Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance on RSE states that in primary schools the focus should be on teaching the “key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships in all contexts, including online”. This includes the relationships with other children and with adults. The DfE is clear in its guidance 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.

RSE is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of themselves as an individual, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in healthy relationships with self and others, and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience.

Teaching within RSE should also focus on mental wellbeing, as children’s happiness is a key priority for parents. The context of this subject should also enable pupils to develop the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and ultimately, seek and receive support if problems arise

Within the context of the primary school RSE curriculum, topics covered would include: ‘Families and the People Who Care For Me’, ‘Caring Friendships’, ‘Respectful Relationships’, ‘Online Relationships and Being Safe’.

7. Equalities and Obligations

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and ensures that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked-after children.

8. Balanced RSE Curriculum

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues, and educating in accordance with Church teachings, the school will ensure 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.

9. RSE Curriculum Objectives

There are three aspects of RSE:

- (i) Attitudes and values,
- (ii) Knowledge and understanding, and
- (iii) Personal and social skills

These will be delivered in three inter-related ways:

- (a) The whole school / ethos dimension,

- (b) A cross-curricular dimension and
- (c) A specific relationships and sex curriculum

At Sacred Heart our RSE curriculum is based around the Ten Ten Programme entitled 'Life to the Full', which embraces and fulfils the new statutory curriculum. It is 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, and covers 3 modules:

a) Created and Loved by God

This module focuses on 'Religious Understanding', 'Me, My Body, and My Health', 'Emotional Well-Being', 'Life Cycles'. The module explores the individual, rooted in the teaching that we are made in the image and likeness of God. It helps children to develop an understanding of the importance of valuing themselves as the basis for effective and positive personal relationships.

b) Created to Love Others

This module focuses on 'Religious Understanding', 'Personal Relationships', 'Keeping Safe'. The module explores the individual's relationship with others. Building on the understanding that we have been created out of love and for love. It explores how we take this calling into our family, friendships, and relationships, and teaches strategies for developing healthy relationships and keeping safe.

c) Created to Live in Community

This module focuses on 'Religious Understanding', 'Living in the Wider World'. The module explores the individual's relationship with the wider world. It explores how human beings are relational by nature and are called to love others in a wider community through service, through dialogue, and through working for the Common Good.

10. Inclusion and Differentiated Learning within the RSE Curriculum

At Sacred Heart, RSE is taught sensitively and to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to their 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.

Pupils with particular difficulties whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately 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.

RSE lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of: discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), the use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and how to ask for help. (Please see the school [Inclusion Policy](#), [Relational Policy](#) and [Online Safety Policy](#)).

11. 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.

12. Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be a 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.

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. Such questions will be addressed in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

13. Roles and Responsibilities Regarding RSE

13.1 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

13.2 Head teacher

The Head teacher 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 any other appropriate agencies.

13.3 PSHE/RSE Leader

The PSHE/RSE leader with the Head teacher 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.

13.4 All Staff

RSE is a whole school issue.

All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress, teachers 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, and will be responsible for the specific relationships and sex education programme within their class, which includes science, religious education, physical education, RSE and PSHE.

All staff will act as 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.

The school will provide appropriate training for all staff teaching RSE.

All staff have been included in the development of this policy and should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

13.5 External Visitors

At Sacred Heart, we often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and use health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always be communicated to parents and will complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. In Year 5 and Year 6 we offer the children the opportunity to explore puberty with the school nurse. The PowerPoint for this session is shared in advance with the Headteacher, Class teachers and parents. Parents have the right to remove their child from this session should they choose to do so. (See point 14)

The school will ensure that all external visitors are clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our school's Code of Practice developed in line with CES guidance. Any health professional must follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques – just as other teachers would.

The school will ensure that any teaching delivered by visitors and/or health professionals is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

14. Parents and Carers including Right to Withdraw

At Sacred Heart, 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 can assist parents and carers in educating their children. Therefore, we will support parents and carers by providing:

- Material which can be shared with their children at home
- Provide workshops to help parents/carers learn and understand more about RSE
- Keep parents/carers informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered
- Provide parents with information so that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions the children may have about their learning

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. Please refer to the DfE guidance Page 17 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the Right to Withdraw).

15. Supporting Children and Young People 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 what is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well lead to concerns, and worries must not 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.

16. 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, 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 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 circumstances they would have to inform the appropriate body, (e.g., parents, Head teacher, etc.), but that the pupils would always be informed first when such an action was going to be taken

17. Relationship to Other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

The RSE policy is part of the school's PSHE framework. This framework includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents e.g. [Anti-Bullying Policy](#), [Safeguarding Policy etc.](#)

19. Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE Leader 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 by means of questionnaires / response sheets / needs assessments 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.

20. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, the next review will take place September 2025.

Appendix 1: Parent Form: Withdrawal From Non-Statutory Sex Education Within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	