

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Malmesbury



“Walking in the footsteps of Jesus, loving and serving together”

Relationships and Health Education Policy

Defining relationship and health education

The Department of Education 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”. It is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of her or him 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. In primary schools the focus should be on “teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.” This would include the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

Statutory curriculum requirements

We are legally required to teach those aspects of Relationship and Health Education (RHE) which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RHE go further.

Rationale

“As the image of God we are created for love”

(Guidance for Education in Relationships and Health Education in Schools)

The Diocese of Clifton urges Governors and Headteachers of our Catholic Primary schools to play a full part in providing a suitable programme of Relationships and Health Education. The work of Catholic Schools, in this area, will be informed by reflection on the Scriptures, the words and actions of Christ and the teachings of the Church. There are three important concepts which underpin any thinking on this subject:

- a) The dignity and worth of each person made in the image of God. ***“Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.”***
- b) We are called to love and be loved, ***“God is love and whoever lives in love lives in God.”***
- c) We are called to form relationships to live in community, ***“Wherever two or more of you are gathered in my name there I am.”***

Children in our school come from many different backgrounds. They have different life experiences, different maturation rates and different levels of sexual awareness. The pressures and influences on them from society and the media, often subliminal, will not be underestimated. The school will accompany children on the journey to adulthood, modelling for them and enabling them to become capable of whole and wholesome relationships, and discerning their calling.



Above all the school will help children to understand that they are loved by God and capable of loving.

In partnership with the Diocese of Clifton, our response to Government initiatives on Relationships and Health Education (RHE) must be guided by our vision of what it means to be human and our claims to educate the whole person and the need to address issues raised by the actual experience of pupils today.

“... children and young people should be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities... they should be given a positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex.”

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.

Aims

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

- 1) To engender growth in self respect and self worth, recognising that each of us is created in the image of God to give and receive love.
- 2) To explore the meaning and value of relationships and the diversity of expression.
- 3) To enable pupils to understand that love is the basis of meaningful relationships.
- 4) To enable pupils to have an understanding of themselves, their own bodies, their emotional development as they grow, mature and change.
- 5) To encourage pupils to be aware of their attitudes and values and have a sense of responsibility for themselves.
- 6) To provide an understanding of the Church’s teaching on the sacraments and how this underpins its view of relationships.
- 7) To have an understanding of and to give consideration to the beliefs, values, culture and circumstances of others and how that impacts on family life.
- 8) To explain the process of human procreation and sexuality.
- 9) To enable pupils to recognise the importance of the choices they make and that they are responsible for the decisions they take.
- 10) To understand the Church’s teaching on issues concerning human sexuality.
- 11) To help pupils recognise and resist peer, social and media pressure in relation to self image and sexuality.

Programme of Health Education

Holy Family has consulted with staff, parents and governors in adopting a Relationships and Health Education programme suited to the needs of our pupils.



It was agreed by all parties at Holy Family that the school would use the Scheme of Work entitled **'Life to the Full' – Now renamed 'Life to the Full Plus'**. This programme has been adopted by a wide range of Catholic schools nationally. The Scheme of Work sets out a programme to be carried out by the class teacher in year groups of FS2, KS1 and KS2 (YR-Y6) each academic year. The programme builds on previous knowledge and understanding to provide a firm foundation for each pupil suited to their age in an open, honest and dignified way. Members of the Samuel Partnership Schools (Clifton Diocese) met to consult on the details of this policy.

The scheme is available for parents to view if they wish and they are encouraged to do so prior to the delivery of the programme. A consultation period between parents and the school took place in the month from November to December 2020.

This should be read alongside:

- the Secretary of State's 2000 guidance on RHE to which schools must have regard when putting together an RHE policy and any relevant supplementary guidance;
- the guidance on statutory & Church requirements for RHE

The policy will be used by:

- teachers who will look to it to guide their lesson planning parents, who will look to see both the RHE curriculum content and the values the school is promoting
- health professionals, visiting speakers and so on, who will want to know the aims, objectives and values the school's SRE promotes, agreed teaching methodologies and boundaries for their work with young people
- partner schools, who will want to know the school's approach to RHE so they can plan their curriculum in a way that ensures continuity of values and progression in learning.
- education staff involved in wider RHE provision.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents:

The mission of education carried out by the Church and Catholic Schools must always be carried out in accordance with the Principle of Subsidiarity i.e. the school can never replace the parents' rights. The school thus complements the work of the parents in carrying out its professional responsibility in the name of the parents.

The school, through consultation, shares information with parents regarding Relationships and Health Education and respects the parents' right to withdraw their children from such education if they so choose but will also ensure that they are aware that:

"parents who remove their children from such instruction have a duty to give them an adequate formation, appropriate to each child or young person's stage of development"

(Pontifical Council for the Family – *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*)

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some health education delivered as part of statutory RHE. However, this does not apply to the content which is defined under relationship education, health education or National Curriculum Science. Before granting any such request an appointment must be made with the Headteacher to discuss to ensure that parents wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Records will be kept of such meetings and discussions.



Governors:

In line with current legal requirements, Governors have the responsibility for ensuring there is a Relationship and Health Education Policy, drawn up in consultation with parents and teachers, which is in keeping with Catholic teaching. If necessary they need to provide guidelines for the teaching of sensitive issues. They must ensure that the policy is available to parents and that parents know of their right to withdraw their children. Governors must provide sufficient training and resources to see that the topic can be taught correctly, creatively and sensitively. They must ensure that the programme and the resources are monitored and evaluated. This monitoring applies to both the taught curriculum and the wider areas of school life e.g. careers, school nurse. Since all curriculum areas will impact at least indirectly on this area it is important governors provide training and inset for all staff to help them understand the Church's teaching in this area.

Headteacher:

The Headteachers 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.

PSHE/RHE Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator, with the Headteacher, have 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. (They may also be supported by the member of staff with responsibility for child protection).

Teachers and staff:

All adult members of the school community are role models and educators in this dimension of pupils' education. The teacher's role in particular is to; be fully inclusive of all children, value and affirm all pupils, actively promote open and wholesome relationships, develop gospel values and effective pastoral systems; and provide positive and accurate learning about relationships and health. For teachers not directly involved in the overt teaching of Relationship and Health Education there will be opportunities for learning, occurring in all areas of the curriculum which will indirectly refer to this area and all teachers therefore need to be aware of the school's policy and curriculum for Relationship and Health Education.

Teachers should advise governors on the content and the organisation of Relationship and Health Education. They should help develop suitable procedures for dealing with requests from parents to withdraw their children from health education lessons; contribute to reviewing existing provision and use their professional skills in developing the curriculum.

They should teach Relationship and Health Education curriculum as detailed in the school agreed scheme of work, 'Life to the Full Plus,' and make sure their own understanding of the teaching of the church is clearly developed. Teachers need to participate in timetabling, monitoring and evaluating Relationship and Health Education.

Pupils:

All pupils have the right to be respected as a unique and unrepeatable human being created in the image of God. They have the right to receive accurate information, appropriate to their age and ability, to be able to develop spiritually and morally and to have an informed conscience and be able to make informed choices. All pupils will be helped to develop a positive attitude and sense of responsibility regarding their own and others' sexuality; to have a sense of self esteem that enables them to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility.



Governors:

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RHE 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.

Inclusion and differentiated learning

We will ensure RHE 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 children 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.

Equal Opportunities

Class Teachers should ensure that planning takes account for the age and ability of the pupils so that all children have full access to Relationship Education. Differentiated materials and help will be provided for children with Special Educational Needs and those for whom English is an Additional Language. In our school, all are welcome and we do not discriminate.

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 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.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RHE. These may be 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 RHE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. (See also *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions*, Page 23 for more detail)

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.

Child Protection

All adults have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils. Staff must be aware that effective Relationship and Health Education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RHE takes place. Effective RHE 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.

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 RHE programme, will have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, 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 will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. 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 others, e.g., parents, Co Headteachers, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

Monitoring and evaluation

Class teacher's will complete pre and post assessment, prior to each topic, and will be responsible for monitoring progress and evaluating lessons to ensure these are assessable to all children. The PSHE/RHE Co-ordinator/s 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 biannually 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.

Relationship to Other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This RHE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc) 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. Learning about RHE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RHE audit.

Implementation

This policy will be reviewed every year by the PSHE/RHE Coordinator/s, Headteacher, Staff and Governing Body.



Related policies and documents

Religious Education policy

Equality policy

Behaviour and Self Esteem policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

Life lessons: PSHE and RSE in schools (Education Committee Feb 2015)

Guidance for Teaching Relationships and Sex Education in Schools (Diocese of Clifton, April 2017)

Prepared by: Miss Karen Bathe

Approved by Staff: February 2024

Approved by Governors: February 2024

Review Date: February 2025

Appendix 1

Summary of overall outcomes for primary Relationship and Health Education

Please Note:

- Throughout the whole programme of Relationship and Sex Education pupils should be acquiring the knowledge they need to recognise and report abuse (emotional, physical, sexual). Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice.
- We have not specifically addressed health education here. There is a considerable overlap between health and relationship education

Key:

Red is Relationship education.

Blue is Sex Education

KEY STAGE 1

By the end of key stage one pupils should be able to:

- recognise and understand the importance of valuing themselves and others and that they are a child of God
- recognise and appreciate the term family and the differing formats it can take
- recognise their membership in a family and the roles of individuals in the differing structure of families
- understand human growth and development and know themselves as male and female
- be able to name the main external parts of the body



- recognise and understand the term relationship and the range of relationships i.e. friends, family, husband /wife, brother/sister
- recognise and understand the positive characteristics of a positive relationship i.e. sharing, working together, trust
- know about rituals that mark life such as birth, marriage and death
- recognise that life is a gift from God and is precious
- recognise and begin to understand the range of emotions and how to deal with them in a positive and effective manner
- recognise and understand how to keep oneself safe
- recognise the need for personal health and safety and personal hygiene
- recognise and understand the dangers associated with use of the internet and other technology, including appropriate boundaries when using multimedia.

KEY STAGE 2

By the end of key stage two pupils should be able to:

- value themselves as a child of God, and their body as God's gift to them
- identify and explain how they grow and change throughout life
- understand and explain what is meant by the term relationship and the differing kinds of relationships i.e. within families, with friends and communities
- develop an appreciation and understanding of what is involved in bringing up children and what responsibilities parents have
- explain the rituals celebrated in Church, marking birth, marriage and death and be able to talk about the sacrament of marriage within the Catholic Church and marriage within the law of the land.¹
- be able to identify and explain their changing emotions and the need to respect other peoples' emotions and feelings. This should include a discussion of positive mental and emotional wellbeing and how to develop this.
- begin to know and understand about the changes that come about through puberty

¹ Please note at this stage this is not complicated. The law recognises the right of two people to marry irrespective of gender. In the Catholic church sacramental marriage is between a man and a woman. We however 'We cannot truly call on God, the Father of all, if we refuse to treat with respect any individual, created as they are in the image of God. There is no foundation within our faith for any theory or practice that leads to discrimination between peoples.' ¹ God is Love Benedict XVI Para 18



- know and understand their own bodies and the need for personal hygiene
- explain the names for the main parts of the body
- know the basic biology of human reproduction
- appreciate and explain that life is precious and a gift from God
- understand and explain the importance for forgiveness and respect in relationships
- understand the responsibility they have for the choices and decisions they make.