

Relationships Sex & Health Education Policy 2021

St. Dominic's Catholic Primary School



Date	Review Date	Subject Leaders	Nominated Governor
March 2021	July 2022	Deirdre Finan, Veronica Frankland, Georgina Hamilton	Eileen Bryant

Introduction

St. Dominic's Catholic Primary School follows the teaching of the Catholic Church, in its daily life through celebration of the Liturgy and through following the values taught in the Gospel of Jesus and our school's Mission Statement:

In Jesus we love, learn, hope, trust and care.

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their rationale for, and approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE).

In drafting this policy, the Governing Body has reviewed the RSE curriculum content with staff, and has undertaken a consultation with parents, staff and governors.

Policy Consultation

This policy will go to consultation with the school community. Consultation will take place via email (due to the pandemic) and the school website with parents asked to submit their views.

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors in the spring 2021. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head teacher, RSHE Leaders, the Governing Body and Staff.

Dissemination

The draft policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and nonteaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website and copies can be obtained from the school office. Details of the content of the RSHE curriculum will also be published on the school's web site.

Defining Relationship and Sex Education

The DfE 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, him or they 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 who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

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 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 RSHE

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. RSHE, 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) RSHE 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 will also be delivered in conjunction with teaching the Religious Education programme and as part of the statutory element of the Science National Curriculum.

All RSHE 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. RSHE will be taught in accordance with the principles set down in other relevant school's policies such as Equal Opportunities and Inclusion.

The school will use the Ten-Ten Resource 'Life to the Full' to deliver the RSHE curriculum content within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church.

Why teach RSHE at primary school?

- It provides an opportunity to talk about feelings and relationships.
- It promotes the skills necessary for effective communication and loving, caring respectful and happy relationships.
- It prepares children for the physical and emotional changes that will take place during puberty.
- It helps develop positive attitudes, values and self-esteem and challenges negative attitudes and prejudices.
- It helps make sense of misinformation in the media and from peers.
- It protects children from sexual exploitation and inappropriate online content.
- It is a statutory part of the science curriculum covering the biological aspects of RSHE.

Aim of RSHE 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 RSHE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them 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 and young people with a 'positive and prudent sexual education' 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, delaying gratification 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 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;
- how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

Outcomes

Inclusion and Differentiated Learning

We will ensure RSHE 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.

Where needed, specialist resources may be used to respond to pupils' individual needs. In some cases, pupils have individual support or work in small groups with a TA or learning mentor.

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.

Promoting inclusions and reducing discrimination are part of RSHE throughout the school and reflect our equality policy. When teaching about relationships and families, we also discuss same sex relationships. In year 5 and 6, questions about different types of relationships, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans relationships may arise and will be dealt with in an inclusive manner, while reinforcing Catholic views on the sanctity of marriage.

Homophobic and transphobic references and homophobic and transphobic actions and bullying are not tolerated in school and are challenged and dealt with as part of our commitment to promoting inclusion, gender equality and preventing bullying.

Equalities Obligations

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equality 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.

Broad Content of RSHE

Three aspects of RSHE - 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
- 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

The proposed content of each module for each Key Stage can be found in the Relationship and Education Curriculum Outline Document. For the purposes of this RSHE programme the Key Stages are:

- Early Years – Reception and Nursery
- Key Stage 1 – Year 1 and Year 2
- Lower Key Stage 2 – Year 3 and Year 4
- Upper Key Stage 2 – Year 5 and Year 6

Programme/Resources

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- trigger drawings
- values clarification

Assessment

As with any learning process assessment of pupils' personal, social and emotional development is important. It provides information which indicates pupils' progress and achievement and informs the development of the programme. Pupils do not pass or fail within the area but have the opportunity to reflect on their own learning and personal experiences and to set personal goals and agree strategies to reach them. The process of assessment has a positive impact on pupil's self-awareness and self-esteem. We do not assess pupils in all areas of PSHE and citizenship programme however opportunities for pupils to reflect on their progress are identified. It is appropriate to assess pupil's values.

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. 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 by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSHE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents/carers must be consulted before this policy is ratified by the Governing Body. They will be consulted at every stage of the development of the RSHE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. We will do our best to find out about cultural views, which may affect the RSHE curriculum and will try to balance parental views with our commitment to comprehensive RSHE and equality. If a parent/carer has concerns about the sex education aspects of the curriculum, we would ask that they make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Senior Leadership Team.

Parents/carers will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSHE programme. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSHE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents continue to have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. This means that parents and carers cannot withdraw their children from RSHE aspects of the science national curriculum, e.g. for changes that occur during puberty which are taught in Year 5.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the RSHE curriculum they must arrange a meeting with a member of the SLT, who will talk through their concerns and discuss the benefits of school RSHE. If they decide to withdraw their child, work will be provided to do in another class. We will offer packs of the teaching materials if parents wish to use this with their children at home.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. Even when a child has been withdrawn from RSHE lessons, if the child should ask questions at other times, these questions would be answered honestly by staff.

Please refer to the DfE guidance for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

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 RSHE 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 RSHE. 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 teachers.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSHE programme. They will be role models for pupils of good, 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 RSHE. 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 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic 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.

Other Roles and Responsibilities regarding RSHE

Governors

- Draw up the RSHE 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 RSHE within PSHE.

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 appropriate agencies.

PSHE/RSHE leader

The Subject 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.

All Staff

RSHE 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 RSHE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSHE. All staff have

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

Relationships to other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This RSHE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the schools other policy documents:

- Bullying policy,
- Safeguarding Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- E-Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff code of conduct Policy
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

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 RSHE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSHE audit.

Children's Questions

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

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSHE. 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 RSHE 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 Sex and Health Education (RSHE) 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.

Supporting Children and Young People who are at Risk

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSHE takes place. Effective RSHE 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 RSHE 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 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 circumstance they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSHE 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.

As part of implementing the RSHE curriculum, schools must consult with the children, parents, staff and governors to ensure there is a general consensus on our approaches to policy and the curriculum content.

As part of this, parents, staff and governors, will be asked to read through the following two documents and make comments on them. The two documents that you are asked to read as part of the consultation will be:

Consultation on Relationships Sex & Health Education Policy, March 2021 (draft)

Consultation on Relationships Sex & Health Education Curriculum Outline March 2021 (draft)

These are available on the school website or there are copies available from the school office.

If you wish to carry out further reading around RSE, the following documents may be of use to you –

- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education, Department for Education](#) Department for Education Guidelines
- [Learning to Love](#) An introduction to Catholic Relationship and Sex Education for Catholic Schools

In order to provide your feedback to this consultation, you will be asked to complete an anonymous Survey Monkey questionnaire. If you would rather have a paper copy of the consultation, you can request one through the school office.