

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Reviewed: Spring 2024
Next Review: Spring 2025

Mission Statement Motto: *Building relationships with God and each other, working hard in faith and hope to give our best in all things*

MISSION STATEMENT

Holy Cross is a Catholic Primary School. Its religious dimension lies at its heart and is fundamental to its existence. Its ethos is based around Christian values as laid down by the person of Jesus Christ, and exemplified in His teaching. Our Mission Statement expresses this clearly:

Holy Cross is a Catholic school which seeks to build a closer partnership with parents, the parish and the wider community. We work hard to provide an environment which is secure, stimulating and happy and where everyone is appreciated and enabled to give of their best. We encourage all to have respect for each individual, to be honest, tolerant, just and forgiving and to develop a closer relationship with each other and through this, a closer relationship with God.

We recognise Jean Baptiste Debrabant's vision that:

"A Christian based education is a sure hope for the future of religion and society."

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales states:

We expect all Catholic schools to ensure that space is made in the curriculum for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). The content of what is taught must express the teaching of the Church, and should be delivered to suit the age of the children or young people to whom it is addressed. We need to recognise that without providing an education in this area, we leave many young people vulnerable to receiving their education second hand and often from sources, which damage them and their capacity to love.

Learning to Love: An Introduction to Catholic Relationship and Sex Education (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education) for Catholic Educators, (page 3) October 2020

Introduction

According to Pope John Paul II, "Love that leads to marriage is a gift from God and a great act of faith toward other human beings"

The purpose of this policy is to set out the intentions with regard to Relationships, Sex and Health Education at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School.

In this policy, and after consultation with Governors and staff, in partnership with pupils and their parents, we set out our rationale for, and approach to, the teaching of RSHE in our school.

This policy covers RSHE (Relationship, Sex and Health Education) and it should be read in conjunction with the current Personal, Social, Health and Economic Policy, British Values Policy, the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy and the Religious Education Policy.

Rationale

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full' (John, 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 at Holy Cross Catholic Primary 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

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ideals.

Our school vision and ethos is strongly supported through, and embedded in, the delivery of our whole school approach to the curriculum. At school we are committed to ensuring that the emotional and social needs of all of our children are met within the school environment, and we support the development of children's health and wellbeing, self-esteem and confidence.

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 beauty, and share in the divine creativity. RSHE therefore, 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, RSHE will be firmly embedded into our curriculum 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.

All RSHE will be in line 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. It will prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Statutory curriculum requirements.

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.' This is 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.

It is a legal requirement that we teach those aspects of RSHE which are statutory. It is important to consider, however that the importance of the inclusion of RSHE within our curriculum extends beyond the statutory requirements. The focus is on 'teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other children and adults. This includes the topics of families and the people who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

We continue to develop the children's sense of self-worth and teach them how society is organised and governed. We believe that it is important the children experience the process of democracy and that they learn about their rights and responsibilities.

The mandatory elements within the RSHE Curriculum for primary schools are Relationships and Health Education and Sex Education that is covered in science within the National Curriculum.

The teaching of RSHE (along with the non-statutory PSHE objectives) help to meet the objectives set out in the Children's Act 2004 (Every Child Matters) "to be healthy, stay safe enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing". The DfE guidance can be found here:

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Aims and Objectives of the RSHE curriculum

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we are committed to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and emotional) and we believe that RSHE is an integral part of this education. We believe that high quality, age-appropriate teaching of RSHE (along with PSHE and citizenship) will help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

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. The intent of the RSHE curriculum is:

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;
- recognising the importance of marriage and family life; fidelity in relationships
- respect for others
- being a thoughtful and responsible member of the community
- being active members of a democratic society

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;
- being patient and learning to recognise the appropriate statements in the development of relationships;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise risk to health and personal integrity.

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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;
- what makes a good relationship with others.
- how to be safe.

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 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.

The RSHE programme will:

- provide information that is relevant and appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the children.
- develop skills of assertiveness, communication and effective dialogue in relationships.
- encourage the exploration and clarification of values and attitudes.
- foster self-esteem, positive self-image and confidence.
- take into consideration the different needs of individual pupils in respect of different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances.

Topics and themes will be revisited from year to year taking account of the children's development and the spiral curriculum concept.

The content of the Relationships, Sex and Health Education Programme, including learning outcomes, will be based on Life to the Full (by Ten:Ten resources), local authority resources and Diocesan resources including Journey in Love'.

Topics will include:

- feelings and relationships
- my healthy body including physical health and fitness, healthy eating and drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- lifestyles and culture
- growing up including the changing adolescent body
- being safe including health and prevention, basic first aid
- online relationships including internet safety and harms
- mental wellbeing

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Delivery will be through explicit teaching and cross curricular links.

Key Decisions

Following consultation, pupils at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School will follow the Life to the Full including the non-statutory discussions about:

- introducing the correct names of genitalia (Year 1)
- puberty (Year 4),
- how conception and life in the womb fits into the cycle of life (Year 4)
- female genital mutilation (Year 5)
- sexual intimacy (Year 6)
- ways to combat and deal with viewing videos and images of an adult nature (Year 6).

Protected Characteristics in relation to RSE

Gender reassignment:

Whilst we are mindful that gender reassignment is a real issue for many primary schools, the subject is not currently explored in Life to the Full. Rather, the programme provides foundational language about our core identity as children of God to enable schools to address specific issues with their whole school community.

Marriage and Civil Partnership:

The sessions “Who’s Who?” (EYFS Module 2.2.1), “Special People” (KS1 Module 2.2.1) and “Family, Friends and Others” (LKS2 Module 2.2.1) explore different family structures. They provide opportunities for children to share news about their own family structure in a non-judgemental forum and also provide opportunity for discussion the different family structures given in the various stories and scenarios. The decision on if and when to include same-sex partnerships, single parent families or non-married parents within these discussions is left for the school to decide; however, the foundation has been laid for a healthy conversation on these matters in these sessions.

In the Paradise Street dramas (UKS2 Module 1), various family structures are represented through the characters in the films and there is discussion about specific family structures, such as families with ‘two mums and two dads’ in “Gifts and Talents” KS2 Module 1.2.1.

Pregnancy and maternity:

Although pregnancy is explored in age-appropriate ways throughout the primary schools’ programme in the unit Life Cycles (All Key Stages, Module 1 Unit 4), the specific issue of maternity discrimination is not explored in primary schools.

Sex:

Throughout the primary schools’ programme, the teaching, stories, videos and image content establish an understanding of the equality of men and women, boys and girls. For example, in the unit “Me, My

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Body, My Health” (All Key Stages, Module 1, Unit 2) the discourse about the physical differences between boys and girls is matched by teaching about gender equality and dispelling gender stereotypes.

Sexual orientation:

Attraction to the opposite sex is touched upon in UKS2 Module 1 within the ‘Paradise Street’ series as part of a discussion around emotional changes. However, sexual attraction as a subject is not addressed as part of the Life to the Full programme.

A New Resource (from March 2023) UKS2, Module 2, Unit 2 session, ‘Build Others Up’ is an anti-bullying resource framed by the protected characteristics. The protected characteristics of sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment are not explicitly named within the session’s film. Later in the session, children are presented with a number of scenarios to discuss and sort. Some of the scenarios (H, I and L) concern discrimination / bullying of the protected characteristics of sex and/or sexual orientation.

Parents and carers

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we recognise that parents and carers 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. Parents and carers will be informed when the more sensitive aspects of RSHE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their child’s learning.

All parents will have access to the school’s RSHE programme (Life to the Full), through an online Parent Portal which provides parents with:

- Information about the programme children will be following;
- Access to resources;
- Suggestions for further activity at home.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Sex Education **where this is not contained in the National Curriculum**. It is, however, hoped that parents sending their children to a Catholic school would see the importance of educating children in these matters within the context of the Catholic faith. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they should notify the school by contacting the headteacher. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning. The Catholic Education Service espouses the belief that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

Roles and responsibilities:

Governors

The foundation governors of Catholic schools/academies are appointed by the Bishop in order to promote and safeguard the Catholic character of the school. As such, they should also be aware of and implement the Church’s teaching and any diocesan guidelines regarding Relationships Education, Relationships, Sex Education, and Health Education, for the benefit of children and young people in their care.

- draw up the RSHE policy, in consultation with parents and staff;
- ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- ensure that the policy is in accordance with other school policies;
- ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children;

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- establish a link governor to share the monitoring and evaluation of the programme;
- ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics.

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 LA.

RSHE Subject 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 information relating to RSHE.

All Staff

RSHE is a whole school responsibility. 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 to all staff.

Relationship to other policies and subjects

This RSHE policy is compatible with the school's other policies i.e., PSHE, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Learning about RSHE will link to/complement learning across the curriculum. This policy should be read in conjunction with the current PSHE Policy, British Values Policy, the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy and the Religious Education Policy.

Supporting children at risk

Children need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSHE takes place. Effective RSHE will provide opportunities for discussion and if appropriate, any concerns raised will be shared with parents. Such discussion may lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. If a disclosure is made, the teacher will follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Teachers are aware of the needs of their pupils and will not let any fears or worries go unnoticed.

Confidentiality and advice

All stakeholders are aware of this policy.

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 discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties in line with the school's pastoral care. Teachers will explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and will explain that in such circumstances, they would have to inform others.

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Monitoring and evaluation

The programme will be evaluated as part of the monitoring and evaluation schedule. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy, for which they remain ultimately responsible

Implementation and review of policy

Implementation of this policy has taken place after consultation with the Governors and parents. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher, RSHE Subject Leader, the Governing Body and Staff.

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