

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Reviewed: Autumn 2025
Next Review: Autumn 2026

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.

‘Building relationships with God and each other, working hard in faith and hope to give our best in all things.’

Through our school core values of –
Respect, Honesty, Tolerance, Justice and Forgiveness

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.

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.

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Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors in the Autumn term 2025.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Head teacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and Staff. The next review date is Autumn 2026.

Dissemination

The policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website and a copy is available in the school office. Details of the content of the RSE 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 knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships".

High quality RSE does this by promoting their "moral, social, mental and physical development" and cultivating "positive characteristic including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness". 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 decision in conscience.

In Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, the focus is be on "teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe."

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 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 live and live life to the full.' (Jn.10.10)

In developing a Holy Cross Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) policy, we have incorporated the teachings of the Catholic Church as articulated by Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia* and ensured that our specific

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community makeup and needs are considered as well. We have been mindful of the “mosaic” of families that we serve and we have ensured that the church's teachings of the importance of love, respect, and compassion in all relationships, including romantic ones are delivered and highlight the role of the family as the foundation of society.

According to Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia*, parents are the primary educators in matters of RSE, and Catholic schools play a supporting role in this effort. This is reflected in our policy.

It should be emphasized that each person is created in the image and likeness of God, and thus deserving of love, mercy, and respect. We should acknowledge and celebrate our differences but bring this back to the idea of equality in the eyes of God.

At Holy Cross in particular we must be mindful of the different cultural heritages and ways of showing love, affection and respect that we may encounter.

Pope John Paul II's teachings on RSE highlight the importance of understanding the full spectrum of human intimacy, from the physical to the emotional and spiritual. Holy Cross' RSE policy should therefore prioritise relationships over sexual activity and should aim to help students develop healthy, loving relationships that reflect the teachings of the church.

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. RSE, 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) RSE 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 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 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. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

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

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explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

Aim of RSE and our Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) through 'Building relationships with God and each other,' and 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, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes, through developing our core values of **respect, honesty, justice, tolerance and forgiveness**. 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"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.
- Respect for those of other cultures, traditions and family types

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;

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- 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;
- how to keep themselves safe by 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 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 RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances.

For example, we will answer question sensitively if older children may have questions around the concept of sexual orientation. We will be considerate of the various faiths and culture at our school and ensure RSE 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.

Equalities and 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.

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.

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The model Catholic Curriculum provided by the CES, which we follow (and deliver through the programme: “Journey in Love”), includes over 100 objectives that cover the 33 objectives provided by the DFE, and more.

A Journey in Love is a resource created by Sister Jude Groden. The majority of the DFE objectives are covered through journey in love, and those that are not are added back into our RSE curriculum to ensure full coverage.

It is the recommended programme of study for Catholic schools for Sex and Relationship Education, and has been written as a progressive scheme of work that supports the Religious Education, PSHE and Science curricula taught within the school.

As children progress through St Teresa’s, they discover more and more about themselves and the wider world. This thirst for learning new things in all aspects of life is fostered by the school, who attempt to create a safe, stimulating environment for learning; supporting all children in their development.

Our mission statement which drives the school, attempts to achieve this goal following the Gospel values of love, acceptance, respect and personal reflection.

Central to our work within the school is learning about our faith, including understanding ourselves, our position in our community and how we develop as human beings - our spiritual, social, emotional and physical development. This is how A Journey in Love fits in to the school’s curriculum. The scheme permeates through all levels of learning throughout the school. It focuses on friendship, family, community, relationships and spirituality; a guide to the children’s development as young Catholics.

As you would expect, not all issues related to personal development are covered by the end of Year 6. The content is age appropriate and is taught with sensitivity, taking into account the children’s level of maturity in regard to the delivery of the lessons. We view RSE (Relationships & Sex Education) as putting the “Relationship” first. Much like St Pope John Paul’s intimacy pyramid shown earlier, we ensure that children are given a strong foundational understanding of friendship, selflove, building and fixing relationships and common care for their fellow human before we move into the teaching of what is meant by intimate love in the final years of primary school.

As with all aspects of learning, children are naturally curious and many will have questions related to their lessons. Opportunities to discuss questions form part of the lessons and, again, these are treated with care and understanding.

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

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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

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).

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection

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- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- trigger drawings
- values clarification

Assessment

Children do not sit formal tests for RSE but this does not mean that this is not assessed. A teacher will assess children's understanding and ability to engage with RSE teaching as a part of ongoing formative assessment. Children may be assessed in their understanding of a particular concept taught, their ability to reflect upon and engage with the material as well as their ability to live out the values of acceptance, love and friendship promoted in these lessons.

RSE naturally has cross curricular links with other subjects, as although a specific RSE grade is not reported, a child's achievement and progress in RSE learning will feed into their RE, PSHE and Science assessment respectively (depending on the nature of a specific learning focus.) These are assessed throughout the year and reported to the headteacher and governors termly.

As well as this, parents will be given input from class teachers at parent's evening and the end of year report about a child's ongoing behaviour and attitudes. The teaching of RSE, being the teaching of how to form meaningful and positive relationships with one another naturally will feed into this as well.

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 RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

(The resources for year 5 and 6 are not on the website, as younger children may accidentally download resources that are not suitable for them if browsing our site. Email the office if you wish to be sent a copy of these files.)

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. Should parents wish to withdraw their

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children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher. 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. Please refer to the DfE's RSE and Health Education guidance, July 2025 p.6 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 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 resides with the class 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

If our school should call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE, such a visit would 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 as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

Other Roles and Responsibilities Regarding RSE

Governors

- draw up the RSE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers;
- ensure that the policy is available to parents;

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- 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 the policy meets statutory requirements;
- 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.

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/RSE and Science Co-Ordinator

The co-ordinator 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. The Science coordinator should be liaised with in areas that impact this subject, particularly with the content taught in the later years. PSHE, RE and Science leaders should ensure that Science curriculums and RSE curriculums complement one another and are timed so that material aimed at older children is synchronised and taught at the same time. It would not be appropriate to teach about the science of sex, having not laid the RSE groundworks beforehand.

All Staff

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

Relationship to other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. Ten:Ten is the main scheme used for delivering PSHE lessons across the school. Ten:Ten is used to compliment and support the "Journey in Love" scheme used to deliver RSE.

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Pupils with SEND needs will receive appropriately adapted teaching and support to enable them to develop mature knowledge, understanding and skills within. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of pupils.

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.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. 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 RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. The age and maturity of these children will help form those ground rules.

If information that causes safeguarding concerns are revealed in these sessions, teachers will follow standard safeguarding procedure. (See next section.)

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 provocative or is of a personal nature.

Parents may be informed if a child asks a question that the teacher believes was asked in good faith, but did not feel that class was old or mature enough to hear the answer to yet. Parents can then best decide how to answer this question at home or to wait until a later date.

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 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 RSE 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.

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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, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The PSHE 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 RE coordinator will support them in this. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of 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.

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