



Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Date of policy: March 2025

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

1.1 Under the *Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019*, made under sections 34 and 35 of the *Children and Social Work Act 2017*, schools are required to teach:

- relationships education (all primary aged pupils)
- health education (all pupils in state-funded schools only)
- relationships and sex education (RSE) (all **secondary** aged pupils)

1.2 At St Teresa's, as a Catholic school, we are guided by the Catholic Education Service who state that Catholic schools are required to deliver Relationship and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) in accordance with the teachings of the Church. We take this approach in conjunction with the guidance issued by the DfE. The Catholic Education Service use the term 'RSE'.

2. Rationale¹

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full.' (John.10.10)

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 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.

¹ CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pg2

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. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Our RSHE programme enshrines the Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to God's call to love others with a proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body.

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.

3. Definitions

3.1 Relationships Education²

As a Catholic school, we are guided by the DfE and CES. DfE guidance describes Relationship Education:

'the focus in primary school 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 people who care for me; caring friendships; respectful relationships; online relationships and being safe.'

3.2 Sex education³

Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools. The national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas such as: the main external body parts; the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. Our curriculum:

'It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of themselves, 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.'

4. Parents And Carers – including the right to be excused from Sex education

4.1 'The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships'.⁴

² DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 updated 2021 pg19

³ CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pg1

⁴ DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 updated 2021 pg17

‘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.’⁵

Therefore, we will work closely with parents/carers when planning and delivering our RSHE programme and we will support parents and carers by sharing and providing materials where necessary.

4.2 Parents and carers will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of our RSHE programme will be delivered, in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children’s learning.

4.3 We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. However, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education except in those elements which are required by the Science National Curriculum. Should they wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Headteacher who will automatically grant the request. If a child is withdrawn, we will ensure that they receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

4.4 There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.⁶

5. A balanced curriculum⁷

6.1 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.

6.2 Pupils will also receive clear scientific information inline with the National Curriculum for Science.

6.3 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.

6. Controversial or sensitive issues; managing difficult questions; safeguarding⁸

At St Teresa’s, we believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSHE programme.

⁵ CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pg5

⁶ DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 updated 2021 pg18

⁷ CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pgs5-6

⁸ CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pgs7-8

The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

At St Teresa's, we want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSHE can take place. We will 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. We recognise that 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. If this happens, adults will tell the pupil/pupils at the time that they will speak to them after the lesson. A record of the discussion will be made and parents/carers made aware if necessary.

We recognise that pupils 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 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 will follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

SECTION 2 – WHAT PUPILS WILL LEARN

7. What pupils will learn - Relationships education⁹

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

8.1 Families and people who care for me

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
- that marriage* represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

8.2 Caring friendships

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends

⁹ DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 updated 2021 pg20-22

- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

8.3 Respectful relationships

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships

* (Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious)

- the conventions of courtesy and manners
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

8.4 Online relationships

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
- how information and data is shared and used online.

8.5 Being safe

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe

- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

8. What pupils will learn - Sex education¹⁰

DfE guidance '*Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education*' states 'it is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively.' It recommends therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. In order to do this, we use CES guidance '*A Model Policy For Relationships And Sex Education*'.

By the end of key stage 2 we aim:

9.1 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.

9.2 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.

9.3 to know and understand:

- the Church's teaching on relationships and the nature and meaning of sexual love;

¹⁰ CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pgs3-4

- 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.

9. What pupils will learn – Physical health and mental wellbeing¹¹

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

10.1 Mental wellbeing

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
- how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

10.2 Internet safety and harms

- that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.
- why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.
- that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.

¹¹ DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 updated 2021 pgs32-35

- how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
- where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

10.3 Healthy eating

- what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
- the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

10.4 Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

- the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.

10.5 Health and prevention

- how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
- about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
- the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.

10.6 Basic first aid

- how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

10.7 Changing adolescent body

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle

SECTION 3 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

10. How RSHE will be taught

RSHE forms one part of the personal development of pupils at St Teresa's.

Through teaching RSHE at St Teresa's, we 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.¹²

DfE guidance on RSHE is statutory, but schools are free to determine how to deliver its content. At St Teresa's, we have chosen to use resources A Journey in Love, which are

¹² CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pg3

within Salford Diocese recommendations. These resources fit into our broad and balanced curriculum. It is a graduated, age-appropriate programme and when using it, we take into account the developmental differences of our children.

Our RSHE programme is delivered to pupils by their class teachers supported by Healthy Schools Team where appropriate.

Aspects of RSHE which pupils should know by the end of primary school may be delivered through other curriculum areas.

Our programmes of study will also be delivered with reference to the law, in particular to the Equality Act (see below, pt 14).

11. Transition to High School¹³

It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. At St Teresa's our programmes are tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of our pupils. They will ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for Science – how a baby is conceived and born.

At St Teresa's, we ensure that all our teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content.

We take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic; and we take this into consideration in designing and teaching Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education.

We also consider the makeup of our student body, including the gender and age range, when considering whether it is appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with particular protected characteristics (which mean that they are potentially at greater risk).

We are alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotyping and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated. Any occurrences are identified and tackled.

At St Teresa's, through our programmes of study, we enable pupils to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help.

12. Cross-Curricular Links

15.1 This policy is delivered as part of our PSHE framework and is compatible with our school's other policy documents including our Behaviour Policy and our Safeguarding Policy.¹⁴

15.2 It also complements several national curriculum subjects and we look for opportunities to draw links between the subjects and integrate teaching where appropriate. For example:

¹³ DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 updated 2021 pg23

¹⁴ CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pg7

- The National Curriculum for Science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSHE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.
- The National Curriculum for Computing aims to ensure that all pupils can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including logic, algorithms and data representation. It also covers e-safety, with progression in the content to reflect the different and escalating risks that young people face as they get older. This includes how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private, and where to go for help and support.
- The National Curriculum for PE aims to ensure that pupils develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in a competitive sport and activities and lead healthy, active lives.¹⁵

13. External visitors¹⁶

Our school will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSHE. These visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions.

External visitors will be clear about their role and responsibilities whilst they are in school delivering a session.

Any visitor delivering aspects of the RSHE curriculum 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, 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.

14. Governance

Our link governors for RSHE are Mrs Brooks and Ms Kelly.

15. Date of policy and review

Date of policy: March 2024

(to be approved by the governing body at next meeting following consultation on May 22nd 2024)

This policy is available to parents/carers and anyone who asks for it free of charge from our office and is also published on our website.

This policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years.

¹⁵ DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 updated 2021 pg39

¹⁶ CES A Model Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 revised 2020 pg6