

# RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

This is an interim policy whilst the school considers its curriculum in relation to statutory changes which will be implemented in Sep 2021



## Mission Statement

*“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as  
we learn love and grow together”*

Reviewed – Autumn 2019

To be reviewed – Autumn 2021

Reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee

Ratified at Full Governing Body meeting

Signature:

Chair of Governors      Date ratified: 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019

## INTRODUCTION

We believe that gradual and positive education in Sex and Relationships is a life-long learning about physical, moral, and emotional development, which recognises that human sexuality is a gift from God. Because of this we strive for the very highest of Christian ideals in our teaching and learning which underpin and are reiterated in our Mission Statement:

The Archdiocese of Westminster Education Service 'Guidance on Education for Personal Relationships – *Sex and Relationships Education*' (Dec 2006, p3.) states that: '*The vision of education promoted and pursued by the Catholic community has always emphasised that our aim is to educate the whole person*'

Therefore St Vincent de Paul School '*sets out to be a school for the human person and of human persons. The person of each individual human being, in their material or spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: this is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic School... For this reason the Catholic School, in committing itself to the development of the whole person does so in obedience to the solicitude of the Church, in the awareness that all human values find their fulfilment and unity in Christ.*'

*(The Catholic School on the threshold of the Third Millennium, para 9 Congregation for Catholic Education).*

As part of its commitment to develop and educate the whole person, the Catholic community recognises that:

*'Children and young people need to be provided with positive and prudent sex education'*

*(ref: Bishops of the Second Vatican Council.)*

The preparation of this policy statement has involved careful consideration by teachers and governors of the needs of the children in our care and advisory statements by authorities within the Catholic Church and the Department of Education, as well as the legal requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988.

***Parents and pupils have also been consulted as part of the review process.***

## PRINCIPLES

The 1988 Education Reform Act states that schools should provide a curriculum which promotes '*the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils ..... and of society and prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life*'. Sex and Relationship education is an integral part of the growth and development of pupils and cannot be neglected if the school is to fulfil its statutory obligation. Whilst fully acknowledging and complying with these legal requirements we believe that education in sexuality is a life-long process which recognises that human sexuality is a gift from God. We stress the Christian influence on our teaching of all areas of the curriculum and ensure that this teaching is placed firmly within the tradition of the Roman Catholic faith.

- We are made in God's image, Jesus is word-made-flesh, all flesh is holy
- Jesus' command to love is the basis of Christian morality
- Humans are created out of love
- To be human is to relate – we exist in relationships
- There is a need to overcome misunderstanding and the distortion of views and values often portrayed in the media

## **AIMS**

We believe that the inclusion of positive, person centred education is at the heart of Catholic Christian Education. Our aims therefore need to support the personal, moral, spiritual, cultural, mental, physical and social development of all pupils, ensuring that they have the ability to accept their own and others' sexuality in positive ways, to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, to keep them safe from harm and to protect them from exploitation.

We view SRE to be fundamentally concerned with the development, growth and journey of the whole person towards becoming 'fully human, fully alive' as a unique creation made in God's image. We therefore provide lessons which promote an accurate knowledge and understanding of sexuality and relationships, in accordance with the age and ability of our pupils.

Sex and Relationships education is more than a body of knowledge. It is not just about biology and how the reproductive system works, but about relationships, feelings and behaviour, i.e. making choices. Because of this we aim to:-

- engender growth in self-respect and self-worth, recognising that each of us is created in the image of God
- have an awareness of where pupils are, in their own knowledge and understanding so that their concerns can be identified
- explore the meaning and value of life, and give some appreciation of the values of family life
- enable pupils to have an understanding that love is central to, and the basis of, meaningful relationships
- enable pupils to have an understanding of themselves, their own bodies, and their emotional development as they grow and change
- encourage pupils to be aware of their attitudes and values and have a sense of responsibility for themselves
- enable pupils to reflect on their relationships and recognise the qualities that help relationships to grow and develop positively.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS**

*'The first and primary educators of children are their parents'*  
(*Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School. p.24*)

We view the partnership of home, school and parish as vital in providing the context for the life-long process of religious formation. Positive and prudent sex education begins within the family and we cannot overstate the importance of parental involvement.

Parents are the key people in:

- Teaching their children about sex and relationships;
- Maintaining the culture and ethos of the family;
- Helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up; and
- Preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings

*DfE (guidance 2000)*

As a Catholic school we co-operate and contribute by bringing a distinctive contribution to this parental privilege and responsibility. We value the advice offered by D.F.E. Circular 5/94 on Sex Education in Schools (7) which asks schools to:- *'recognise that parents are key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.'*

We recognise that there are sensitive issues surrounding the teaching of SRE and aim to work closely with parents to ensure that they fully understand what we teach, in acknowledgement that some questions may best be addressed within the context of the family environment. We invite parents to view the teaching materials used in Year 6 and to speak to the class teachers about the content of SRE lessons.

**Parents/ carers have the option to withdraw their child from SRE lessons if they so wish.**

### **MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

SRE is part of the National Curriculum Science programme, but may also be taught during Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons. Lessons concerning relationships may also feature in Religion and English lessons. This provides an age-appropriate framework for SRE beginning in Nursery and drawing on a variety of teaching strategies to deliver its objectives.

As much as possible, we provide an interactive learning environment, which is motivating and allows pupils to practise skills as well as to gain information and knowledge. We also allow time for reflection.

Foundation and Key Stage I teachers will endeavour to help children:-

- understand the importance of valuing themselves and others.
- recognise their membership of the family and recognise their roles of individuals in families.
- be able to name the external main parts of the body.
- recognise that babies have special needs.
- appreciate relationships, school community, friends, family, working together, sharing, playing and praying together.
- know about rituals that mark life and especially birth, marriage, death (The Sacraments).
- recognise the range of emotions and how we deal with them.
- know about being safe. Such issues as good and bad touching would be discussed by class teachers as appropriate.
- have an awareness of personal health and safety and personal hygiene.

At Key Stage 2 teachers will endeavour to help children:-

- value themselves as children of God and their bodies as God's gift to them.

- understand that they grow and change throughout life.
- understand what is meant by relationships within families, friends and communities.
- develop an appreciation of what is involved in bringing up children and what responsibilities parents have.
- become aware of the different patterns of friendship.
- know the rituals celebrated in Church related to birth, marriage, death, forgiveness, decision making – The Sacraments – Baptism, Matrimony, The Sacrament of the Sick, Reconciliation, Holy Communion, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.
- believe that God has a purpose for their lives and that they have a vocation possibly within parenthood or Holy Orders.
- be aware of their changing emotions and the need to respect other peoples' emotions and feelings.
- begin to know about and understand the changes that come about through puberty.
- know and understand their own bodies and their need for personal hygiene.
- know the basic biology of human reproduction.
- appreciate that life is precious and a gift from God.
- become aware of the choices they make and that there are good choices and wrong choices.
- recognise the importance of forgiveness in relationships and the all embracing forgiveness of God.

### **CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS**

We recognise that the content of a sex education curriculum outlined above requires enormous flexibility by the teachers. The emphasis we place on positive relationships will permeate all aspects of the curriculum and form the basis of attitudes within our school. However, there will also be times when direct teaching will be necessary e.g. when biological facts are being explained. This will normally occur within the framework of the National Curriculum and in line with our agreed Science scheme. The DfES guidance recommends that both boys and girls know about puberty and how a baby is born as set out in KS1 and KS2 of the National Science Curriculum.

### **Key Stage 1**

- that animals including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce.

- to recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans.
- that humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults.
- to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity.

### **Key Stage 2**

- that the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction.
- about the main stages of the human life cycle.

### **MONITORING/ASSESSMENT**

Teachers will be encouraged to critically reflect on their work in delivering the sex education programme and to engage children in consideration of the relationships in which they are involved. Factual information/assimilation will be assessed and recorded as part of the Science National Curriculum.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

In our school we have a commitment to ensure that our programme is relevant to all pupils and is taught in a way which is age and stage appropriate. Because of the unique nature of this subject, special needs will be considered in terms of the child's relationship with others, him/herself or with God. These relationships may be affected by circumstances such as bereavement, family difficulties, family breakdown, damaged friendships, arguments etc. Special needs may be quantified as long or very short-term but nonetheless must be acknowledged.

Special needs may be assigned to a particular group e.g. the staff have acknowledged it will be necessary to separate girls/boys at the top end of the school so that the girls may freely discuss subjects such as menstruation and the related personal hygiene issues. It may also be necessary to acknowledge and deal with the extra special needs of a sexually abused child. Such a situation would always be dealt with in accordance with the H.C.C. Guide-lines on child abuse which directs procedure with regard to Children, Schools and Families involvement – Herts County Council Protection Policy. Please read in conjunction with our Child Protection Policy. The Child Protection governor will be kept informed.

### **UPPER KEY STAGE TWO**

When pupils reach Year 6, parents will be invited to sign a consent form (appendix 1) agreeing to their child being given a talk by a member of staff. The girls talk will be delivered by a female member of staff and the boys, where possible, by a male member of staff. A senior member of staff will always be present. The talk will cover changes in the body during puberty, and personal hygiene, and will be based on the All that I am program from the Archdiocese of Birmingham. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from this talk. Pupils will be encouraged to treat this subject in a respectful manner, in the context of the Church's teachings on the human body. Questions will be dealt with openly and honestly but any relating specifically to human reproduction will be referred to the parents. The school has some reference materials available on request for parents to borrow, to help discussions with their children.

## **LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

For specific details about possible related issues e.g. inclusion, confidentiality, child protection, anti- bullying etc, reference needs to be made to our relevant school policies.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

All teachers and staff members who are required to teach SRE will have relevant training and resources.

## **RESOURCES**

C.E.S. Document 'Education in Sexuality' 1994.

The video 'Living and Growing' is shown to pupils at the top of the school and the services of the school's Health Adviser are used as is felt appropriate by staff.

Archdiocese of Westminster Education Service. Guidance on Education for Personal Relationships Dec 2006

Archdiocese of Birmingham. All that I am programme. 2007

W.D.E.S. Document Education for Personal Relationships 1998

C.E.S. Document The Common Good in Education 1997

DfES Guidance 2000

Sex & Relationship Education Hertfordshire Guidelines 2002.

**WE ARE GROWING TOGETHER IN THE LOVE OF GOD**

Dear Parents

**Year 6 Pupils**  
**Preparing for Adolescence**

In June 2007 staff and governors published a Sex and Relationship Education Policy following consultation with parents. This policy was updated in 2019. A copy of the policy is attached for your convenience.

In line with school policy a 'Preparing for Adolescence' talk will take place on \_\_\_\_\_. The talk is given by a member of staff. The girls will have a senior female member of staff present and a male member of staff will deliver the boys' talk. Each talk will be held in separate classrooms.

As parents, you have the right to withdraw your child from this talk if you so wish. Pupils are encouraged to treat this subject in a very respectful manner, in the context of the Church's teachings on the human body. According to our policy, any questions which the children ask concerning human reproduction will be referred back to parents for answering in the way that you consider to be most appropriate, given your intimate knowledge of your own child. A copy of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy is available from the office or through our website [www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk](http://www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk).

Please sign the attached slip to confirm that you would like your son or daughter to be included in these talks.

A meeting for parents will be held on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ in order that you are able to see any of the material that we currently use. There will be an opportunity for you to ask questions relating to the talk during this session. If you are unable to attend but still have a question please do not hesitate to contact me.

I am sure that you will agree that it is an excellent opportunity for home and school to work in partnership to ensure that our children begin to be prepared for their lives in wider society.

Yours sincerely

Jon White

**Headteacher.**

**Year 6 Pupils  
Preparing for Adolescence**

**Child's Name** .....

*Please tick the appropriate sentence:*

- I give consent for my child to be given a talk which will cover bodily changes during puberty and personal hygiene.
- I do not give consent for my child to be given a talk which will cover bodily changes during puberty and personal hygiene
- I/We are able to attend the parents' meeting.
- I/We are not able to attend the parents' meeting.

Signed .....