

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

### 1 School Mission Statement

- 1.1 “Through following Jesus, we aim to be a caring, happy school, where everyone is valued and appreciated and can reach their true potential. We hope to: act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.”
- 1.2 Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) 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.

### 2 Consultation

- 2.1 This policy has been produced in consultation with staff and parents/carers. We set out our rationale for and approach to relationships and sex education in our school.

Consultation has taken place with the following groups:

- Review of RSE curriculum content with staff and pupils
- Draft policy and documentation produced
- Consultation with school governors
- Consultation with wider school community e.g. school nurse.

### 3 Rationale

- 3.1 ‘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 in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church’s teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DfE, 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.

- 3.4** 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 and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values

## **4 Aims of RSE**

- 4.1** In partnership with parents, we aim to provide children 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.

- 4.2** To develop the following attitudes and virtues:

- 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 bodies;
- responsibility for one's 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 love;
- recognising the importance of marriage and family life;

- 4.3** To develop the following personal and social skills:

- making sound judgements and good choices;
- loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships and loving, stable relationships;
- managing emotions within relationships including when relationships break down;
- 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;

- 4.4** To develop the following knowledge and understanding:

- 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;

- 4.5 These will be covered through five overlapping themes - moral, spiritual, physical, emotional and social development following the Diocesan Primary Curriculum Framework for PSHE with RSE.

## **5 Inclusion and Differentiated Learning**

- 5.1 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 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. These questions will be responded to in the context of the school's inclusion policy.

## **6 Statutory Curriculum Requirements**

- 6.1 It is a statutory requirement to teach Relationships and Health Education. All maintained primary and secondary schools are obliged to have an up-to-date, fit for purpose RSE policy that describes the content and organisation of RSE. Our curriculum covers the core aspects of RSE including Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World. The RSE curriculum supports and enhances our current RE, Science, Physical Education and Computing Curriculums. The Catholic Primary Relationships and Sex Education curriculum is fully compliant with the statutory requirements.

## **7 Equalities Obligations**

- 7.1 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.

## **8 Broad Content of RSE**

- 8.1 Three aspects of RSE - attitudes and values, personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding will be provided in three inter-related ways: the whole school/ethos dimension; a cross-curricular PSHE approach and a discreet RSE curriculum.

## **9 Programme of Study for RSE**

- 9.1 RSE within St. John Vianney is taught in each year group, using developmental schemes approved by the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. Our school has a broad and progressive RSE curriculum that is supported and enhanced by resources approved by the Diocese including 'Life to the Full'. RSE is delivered throughout the academic year, as outlined on the year group curriculum planning documents. Cross-curricular links are formed with Religious Education, Science, PE and computing as appropriate to the age, understanding and expectations of each year group. Class teachers are responsible for the delivery of RSE, with external support (e.g. school nurse) where this is deemed appropriate and beneficial.

**9.2** The resources that we use in the delivery of our RSE lessons (Life to the Full) include activities, reflections and prayers which ensure all content is rooted within a Catholic framework.

**9.3** RSE Learning outcomes for each year group are outlined in the Curriculum Planning Documents.

## **10 Parents and Carers**

**10.1** Parents/carers are the primary educators of their children. They were consulted before this policy was ratified by the governors. They will be consulted at every stage of the development of any revision of the RSE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. Resources used by the school in the RSE programme will be made available each year for parents/carers to view.

**10.2** Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided but not from teaching the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under the National Curriculum Science Order. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they should notify the school by contacting the Headteacher in writing. The request will be made on a year by year basis. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning.

## **11 Teaching the Programme**

**11.1** Class teachers have the responsibility for teaching PSHE and, as such, the RSE curriculum. On some occasions adults from other agencies will be used to deliver some aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. External visitors will be made clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst they are in school delivering a session. Visitors should adhere to our code of practice developed in line with the school visitor policy/CES guidance 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools' and will be required to ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

## **12 Other Roles and Responsibilities regarding RSE**

**12.1** The Governors will:

- Draw up the RSE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers;
- Ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- Ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g. SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs;
- Ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children;
- Establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used;
- Ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant and statutory RSE and Health Education in addition to National Curriculum science topics.

- 12.2 The headteacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the governing body, parents, the Diocesan Department for Education and the local authority, also appropriate agencies.
- 12.3 The PSHE/RSE coordinator with the headteacher 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
- 12.4 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.

### **13 Children's questions**

- 13.1 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.

### **14 Controversial or Sensitive issues**

- 14.1 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. (See also Sex and Relationship Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000, Department for Education and Employment, July 2000 for more detail) Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time.

### **15 Supporting children and young people who are at risk**

- 15.1 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 safeguarding lead.

### **16 Confidentiality and Advice**

- 16.1** 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.
- 16.2** 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 circumstance they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, headteacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

## **17 Monitoring and review**

- 17.1** The RSE Coordinator will monitor provision by scrutinising plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils work. The programme will be evaluated biennially. Governors will carry out their own audit of the policy and will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Parents will also be consulted. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy. This policy will be reviewed every two years by the headteacher, RSE coordinator, the governing body and staff.

**Signed: Mrs S Langford**

**Date: 30/09/2021**

**Review Date: 30/09/2022**