

# St Catherine's Catholic Primary School



## RELATIONSHIP, HEALTH AND SEX EDUCATION (RHSE) POLICY

*'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full'*

*John 10:10*

### MISSION STATEMENT

#### *GROWING IN FAITH*

*Our vision at St Catherine's Catholic Primary School  
and all we do, and aspire to be,  
is centred on the love, life and teaching of Jesus,  
and rooted in the faith of the Catholic Church.*

#### *AIMING FOR EXCELLENCE*

*Our aim is to build a loving, happy, safe and welcoming school where  
everyone has the opportunity and support to recognise,  
celebrate and develop their God given gifts and talents,  
learning in a creative and friendly school family.*

#### *LEARNING FOR LIFE*

*Journeying together with each other,  
we work in harmony  
to provide outstanding Catholic Education  
for all our pupils preparing them to fulfil their mission  
to the world in which we live.*

**Policy Adopted: February 2024**

**To be reviewed: February 2027**

This policy has been written in accordance with our school Mission Statement, which aims to provide a stimulating and relevant curriculum so that each individual can reach their full potential. We will ensure we create a safe working environment where there is mutual respect and trust amongst everyone.

### **Statutory Requirements**

At St Catherine's we must provide Relationships Education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching Relationship and Sex Education, we must have regard to Catholic Education Service guidance issued by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales 2017.

-The statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996

-The statutory guidance from the Department for Education Equality Act 2010.

### **Consultation that has taken place -**

- Pupil focus groups/questionnaires
- Parent/carer meetings and information sharing
- Review of curriculum content with SLT and Ethos Governors
- Staff meetings and INSET
- Consultation with school Governors

### **Policy Development**

The original policy was developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review - SLT and Ethos Governors - DfE Statutory Guidance, Diocesan Training and review of resources
2. Staff consultation - all class based staff were given the opportunity to look at the resource and policy and make comments and suggestions
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation - parents were sent information and invited to a Presentation and Consultation Meeting which fed into the Policy
4. Pupil consultation - we investigated what pupils said they wanted from their Relationship Health and Sex Education.
5. Ratification - once amendments were made, the Policy was shared with Governors and ratified.

Copies of the document are available to all parents/carers through the school's website, and printed copies are available, free of charge, on request.

## Rationale:

Catholic schools, like all other schools in England, are required to produce a bespoke written policy in consultation with parents/carers, following the guidance issued by the Department for Education on Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), there is no requirement to produce a separate policy for Health Education.<sup>1</sup>

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 RHSE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of all pupils.

In a Catholic school, any teaching or formation about human love, sexual relationships and human development must be rooted in the teaching of the Catholic Church and the emphasis placed on what it is to be truly human in Christ. The understanding and formation of respectful, loving relationships which exist within families and between friendships, presented within a positive framework of Christian virtue is core learning within an RSE curriculum in our Catholic schools.

Our school's strong Catholic ethos must not be a barrier to effective RSE teaching and learning and must embrace everyone, regardless of their background and aim to educate the whole person. It must be taught to a high standard and hold the role of parents/carers as primary educators of their children at its core. It must form part of the holistic education, which seeks to form as well as inform all young people in preparation for adult life.

In collaboration with parents/carers, our Catholic school purpose, when teaching RSE is to 'show why the Church's teaching on matters relating to building loving relationships and the role of the sexual expression of love is liberating, rather than imprisoning.'

Within the Catholic Church the foremost of all human loving relationships is marital love; a mutual commitment which is open to, especially but not exclusively, the gift of life. 'The Christian Tradition calls marriage between a man and a woman 'Holy Matrimony' and, between the baptised, a 'Sacrament'. This is because the two parts of God's self-portrait come together definitively. Two become one.'<sup>2</sup>

The Catholic Church teaches that through this sacramental understanding of marriage we can meet Christ by learning to love one another. 'The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church.'<sup>3</sup>

All Relationship, Health and Sex Education 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 their family situation. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

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

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

<sup>2</sup> Bishops' Conference of England and Wales: Learning to Love (March 2017) pg. 6 Paragraph 2

<sup>3</sup> CCC 1661

## Defining relationship and sex education

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." <sup>4</sup>

It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of them self 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. In primary schools the focus 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."<sup>5</sup>

This would include the topics of:

DfE Areas	Life to the Full
Families and the people who care for me	Created and Loved by God
Caring friendships	Created to Love Others
Respectful relationships	Created to Live in Community
Online relationships	
Being safe	

### Aim

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School aims to provide a suitable programme that follows the statutory need to include RHSE into our curriculum and which meets the ethos of its Catholic identity and mission.

The purpose of this Relationship, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) policy is to set out the ways in which the school's provision supports pupils through their spiritual, moral, social, emotional and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life growing up in today's world.

Our School's mission, and through an agreed approach to RHSE, using the Diocesan recommended resource Ten:Ten 'Life to the Full, embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of all pupils. We believe that we can promote the development of the whole child, so that all our pupils can grow in *virtue, wisdom and stature*, understanding both the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing spiritually, as well as moral aspects of relationships within a context of a Christian vision for the purpose of life.

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<sup>4</sup> Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 4

<sup>5</sup> Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 19

## Objectives of RHSE

- To encourage pupils' growth in self-respect, acknowledging we are all created in the image and likeness of God.
- To help pupils develop an understanding that love is the central basis of relationships.
- To help pupils to understand the nature of relationships and to encourage them to reflect on their own relationships and respect similarities and differences between people.
- To develop pupils' confidence in talking, listening, and thinking about feelings and relationships.
- To help pupils acquire the skills necessary to develop and sustain relationships.
- To offer sex education supported by the school's wider curriculum for personal, social and health education in consultation with parents/carers.
- To be able to know their body, learn the names of the main body parts (including head, neck, arms, elbows, legs, knees, face, ears, eyes, hair, mouth, teeth) and say which part of their body is associated with each sense.
- To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty and the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that adult life will bring.
- To teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies, to ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe, can protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed.
- To help pupils to develop a healthier, safer lifestyle.
- To prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom of God.
- To provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- To help pupils develop feelings of dignity, self-worth, self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- To give pupils an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- To create a positive culture around issues of relationships and sexuality.
- To recognise the importance of marriage and family life.
- To teach the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation in consultation with parents/carers.

## Curriculum

At St Catherine's we have developed our curriculum with recommendations from the Diocesan Education Service to ensure that they meet with Catholic Church teaching.

We have considered the age, stage and feelings of pupils and have consulted with parents and staff to ensure we are offering a quality curriculum, which aims to fully meet their needs.

If pupils ask questions outside the scope of our curriculum, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner in line with Catholic Teaching and will advise the child to speak with their parents/carers. Depending on the nature of the question, the school may contact parents/carers directly ensuring pupils are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

## Delivery of Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RHSE)

We intend that the school's RHSE shall be delivered with a cross curricular and integrated approach and delivered specifically through the 'Life to the Full' scheme.

All pupils will be taught the significant aspects of RSE that remain as statutory elements of the National Curriculum for Science. Parents are **unable** to withdraw pupils from these statutory sessions.

Specific pre-consulted Sex Education sessions and objectives will be taught discretely. These sessions, and resources to be used to support them, will be signalled to parents/carers in advance.

Our RHSE teaching will ensure that content is inclusive and differentiated relevant to the age, experience and maturity of pupils. We will ensure that RHSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils, respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances e.g., sexual orientation, faith and culture. The Governing Body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all pupils, in particular those protected characteristics listed under the Equalities Act 2010.

The statutory guidance for Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me.
- Caring friendships.
- Respectful relationships.
- Online relationships.
- Being safe.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of 'family life' and could include married or single parent families, same sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures, along with reflecting sensitively that some children may not have a support structure around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

As a school, we promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Our school environment uniformly applies values of inclusion and respect to all pupils and their families. All staff are proactive in promoting positive relationships.

Teaching will be whole class, mixed gender learning, with the opportunities for separate boy and girl sessions as and when deemed appropriate.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will have support in varying ways depending upon their individual needs and in consultation with their parents/carers.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All RHSE teaching in the first instance will be undertaken in a whole class context. All pupils will have access to the RHSE curriculum. Where pupils have specific educational needs, arrangements for support from parents/carers, outside agencies and support staff are made to ensure these pupils have an appropriate, differentiated curriculum.

### **Safeguarding Procedures**

The school has procedures and policies in place to deal with any sensitive issues or pupils thought to be vulnerable. Where a teacher or member of staff 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.

All staff will pass on any concerns of this nature to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in school - Mr D Croghan or Miss F McGonigle (Deputy DSL).

### **Supporting pupils who are at risk**

Pupils will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RHSE takes place. Effective RHSE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships.

Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their pupils before lessons and not let any fears and worries of their pupils go unnoticed.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

#### **Parents/carers**

The Church recognises parents/carers as the first and primary educators of their children and that it is their right and responsibility to inform and educate their children in matters relating to human relationships and sexual development. St Catherine's Catholic school aims to assist and support parents/carers in this task and seek to work in close partnership with them.

Parents/carers will be fully informed about the right to request their child be withdrawn from Sex Education except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum for Science. In the unlikely event that a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher. Before granting any such request the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will discuss the request with both the parents/carers and, as appropriate, with the child, to ensure their wishes are understood and for the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. St Catherine's will document this process, inform the governor responsible for RHSE and ensure a record is kept.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Pupils**

Pupils at St Catherine's are expected to engage fully in RHSE teaching sessions and, when discussing issues related to RHSE, treat all others with dignity, respect and sensitivity.

#### **Governors**

In accordance with the Education Act of 1996 the governing body has the responsibility to make and keep up to date the school's policy for RHSE and ensure that the policy is consistent with other relevant whole school policies, e.g. SEND; Safeguarding; Anti-bullying. The Governing Body will publish the policy on the school website and make copies available, free of charge to anyone who asks for one. The Governing Body will make known to parents/carers their right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RSE provided at St Catherine's, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum for Science.

The Chair of Governors, Mr M Madden has wider responsibilities in relation to maintaining and developing the Catholic ethos of the school. Mr M Madden has added responsibilities - to aid the

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<sup>6</sup> DfE Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Health Education Statutory Guidance (2019) Paragraph 45.

implementation and development of the RSE policy and programme and will ensure that the curriculum and all resources are in line with Catholic teaching and Diocesan directives.

## **Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure the implementation of the RHSE policy and its integration into the whole school curriculum. The Headteacher and Foundation Governor responsible for RHSE have appointed an appropriately trained RSE leader, Miss F McGonigle, who is responsible for the careful monitoring of teaching resources used.

## **Lead teacher for RHSE**

The lead teacher for RHSE will oversee curriculum planning, training and support for all teaching staff, liaise with any external visitors and monitor and evaluate any materials that will be used. Along with Governors and the Headteacher, the lead teacher for RHSE will ensure that there is a planned process for informing parents/carers about the teaching and learning of RHSE in the school.

## **Teaching staff and other adults**

At St Catherine's, all school staff are involved in developing the whole person and therefore Relationships, Health and Sex Education is a whole school task. Staff are role models to pupils in and around the school as well as in the classroom. All staff have a responsibility of care and to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils.<sup>7</sup> All staff actively contribute to the physical, moral and spiritual wellbeing of their pupils and ensure that this is in line with the school's Catholic ethos and current legislation as well as fostering academic progress. Staff adhere to the teaching timetable for their class, as set out by the subject leader, and record information responses in the class 'Life to the Full' books, according to school guidance.

## **What does outstanding RHSE in Catholic schools look like?**

In order for Catholic RHSE to be fully effective it needs to:

- Be faithful to the Church's vision of human wholeness whilst recognising the contemporary context in which we live today;
- Involve parents/carers as they are primary educators of their child;
- Provide a positive view of human sexuality and dignity of the human person;
- Equip young people with the ability to make practical judgments about the right thing to do in particular circumstances;
- Explore and promote virtues which are essential to promoting respect and dignity;
- Be delivered in an age appropriate way which reflects the development of each individual;
- Be part of the cross-curricular work;
- Be sensitive to the needs of the individual pupil and recognise the mix of pupils with different sexual orientations, genders and family backgrounds in each class;
- Be taken seriously by Governors and teachers as an integrated part of the broad and balanced curriculum that Catholic schools offer;
- Be delivered by competent professionals who understand the Church's teaching.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

<sup>8</sup> Catholic Education Service England & Wales: <https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/relationship-sex-education>



## **Choosing and using resources, including working with external visitors**

Whilst being mindful and taking due regard of what the law says about relationships, sex education and broader safeguarding issues, all materials used to support the teaching and learning of RHSE at St Catherine's will be in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. We are a community that provides opportunities for young people to learn about and recognise what is right and wrong in law, and we support a good foundation of knowledge where pupils are encouraged to ask questions and engage in deeper discussion and debate, informing them on how to stay safe and take responsibility for their actions.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Headteacher, along with the Foundation Governor and lead teacher for RHSE, will be responsible for the careful monitoring of teaching resources used and take into account:

- The need to support parents/carers as the first educators of their child
- The need to support all teaching staff in delivering RHSE programmes through excellent training and CPD
- That resources used are faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church
- That resources used are appropriate for each age and stage of development of all pupils/students including those with SEND
- That the resources used provide clear and accurate knowledge and understanding of the Church's teaching on relationships, marriage and sexual love
- That resources help to provide pupils with a positive understanding of what constitutes good, safe, loving relationships

The Catholic Education Service has created a [model curriculum](#)<sup>9</sup> for primary schools. It is expected that all schools in the diocese of Arundel & Brighton use this as a basis for developing their curriculum. Curriculum resources that can be used to support these materials are *Life to the Full (Ten:Ten)*.

St Catherine's is committed to consulting the diocese if they are unsure of the suitability of any resources before using.

The delivery of RHSE is monitored by Miss F McGonigle and supported by the Governor Ethos Group by undertaking learning walks, staff and pupil consultations, planning and work scrutinies and questionnaires.

Pupils' development in RHSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal informal assessment systems.

## **External visitors**

It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility while in the school. They will be made aware of the school's policy for RHSE and the current curriculum

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<sup>9</sup> <http://catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/relationship-sex-education>

programmes being used. All visitors will be guided when delivering any sessions to ensure that they are respectful of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Further guidance can be found on the Catholic Education Service Website.<sup>10</sup> This checklist for external visitors and speakers will be completed by the appropriate officer in school prior to making contact with external speakers and organisations. This is to ensure the Catholic character of the school is preserved and developed.

## **Dealing with sensitive issues and responding to questions**

### **Pupils' questions**

The Governors of St Catherine's wish to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RHSE 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 RHSE. 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 RHSE programme.

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

Teachers will use their professional judgement when addressing sensitive issues and will answer questions honestly but with due regard given to the nature of the question and the age and maturity of the questioner. Careful consideration will be given to the wide and varied experience and backgrounds of the pupils in their care.

In some cases, it may be inappropriate for the teacher to respond to a specific question and the pupil will be referred to his/her parents/carers if appropriate.

Teachers should never feel pressured into discussing their personal views or experiences and should always respect the sensitivity of their position as a teacher in a Catholic school.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE**

All Governors, all teachers, all support staff, all parents/carers and all pupils will be made aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality.

All lessons, especially those in the RHSE 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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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/guidance-for-schools/governance/item/1003587-checklist-for-external-speakers-to-schools>

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 provision. 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, Headteacher, DSL, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken except when this is deemed unsafe or inappropriate.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years and agreed by the governors.

The Governors of St Catherine's Catholic Primary School have formally adopted this policy for RHSE. It will be reviewed by the Governors and Headteacher on the date below.

### **Resources**

'Life to the Full' Ten:Ten