



CARDINAL HEENAN  
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

# Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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## **Our Mission Statement**

John Carmel Heenan (1905-1975) was Bishop of Leeds, Archbishop of Liverpool and Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. This school is a living tribute to a very faithful servant of God. We are proud to bear his name.

We wear the word Veritas (Truth) on our school blazers in memory of St Thomas Aquinas. He lived a life of prayer and study which led him to the Dominican Order, whose motto is “Veritas” or “Truth”. He sought truth wherever it could be found and burned with the desire to know the one truth, God, which gives meaning to all truths.

The Catholic Christian community at Cardinal Heenan:

- helps pupils to know and build a relationship with Jesus Christ
- forms pupils who live the Catholic faith by prayer, sacraments and service
- makes learning challenging and enjoyable for all so that we will secure the best outcomes and remain lifelong learners who are committed to seeking truth
- helps all to learn and grow, treating one another with respect and generosity
- supports parents as the first and most important educators of our children
- inspires excellence by encouraging every individual to be the person that God calls us to be, in preparation for this life and the life to come

In this policy the Governors of CHCHS set out the rationale for and approach to Relationships and Sex Education at CHCHS. The policy will be reviewed by the Governor responsible for RSE, the Head-teacher, Head of Safeguarding, and RSE co-ordinator (in consultation with pupils, parents, staff) every year. The next review date is January 2021. Copies of this document have been given to members of the Governing Body and staff. Copies of the document are available to parents through the school’s website and a hardcopy is available at any time. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum are also published on the school’s web site.

## **DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION**

The DFE guidance defines RSE as “lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health”. 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 decisions in conscience. The DFE identifies three main elements: “attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding”.

## **STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science, along with the separate requirement to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

## **RATIONALE**

*'I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL'*

(Jn.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.

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 RE and 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 and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

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

## **AIMS OF RSE**

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 to endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, to help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, to recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that we commit ourselves: to provide children and young people 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.

## 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

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
- being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely
- 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 manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice

## **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 their own sexual orientation, faith or culture, and 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. This is in line with the School's Inclusion Policy.

## **EQUALITIES 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.

Our programme will cover:

- The nature and importance of healthy relationships: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, conflict and reconciliation of relationships
- The nature and importance of love
- The nature of partnership, the variety of relationships, and the importance of marriage
- Criminal aspects of relationships such as forced marriage and domestic violence
- Fertility and pregnancy
- The roles and responsibilities of raising children; abortion, adoption and fostering
- Key fact about puberty, adolescence and menstrual wellbeing
- Peer pressure and sex
- The importance and legality of consent; rape, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, trafficking
- Legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality
- Contraception
- Sexual health; STIs and HIV/AIDS; checking for testicular and breast cancer
- Safety online and with modern technologies: internet history; sexting; grooming; pornography
- Gender identity and orientation; sexual bullying and homophobia
- Body image; peer pressure and the influence of the media; cosmetic surgery
- FGM and breast ironing
- Where to get advice

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- discussion

- reflection
- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- mind-maps
- values clarification

Pupil progress will be assessed by means of:

- formative assessments during RE, PSHCE, ICT and Science lessons
- summative end of unit assessments in RE
- summative end of term short assessments during PSHCE

## **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 always support parents and carers with the education of their children, and encourages them to get involved with any homework set or discussions at home that they might have. 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.

This policy has been made available to parents and their contributions welcomed. Parents will continue to be informed/involved if significant changes are made. They are able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme. Our aim is that every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RSE except with regard to those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders (the Equality Act 2010). Should parents wish to withdraw their 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.

## **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 lays with

- All staff (general ethos and attitudes of the school)
- The staff of the RE department (RSE, specific topics)
- The staff of the science department (the science regarding RSE)
- Specific PSHCE teachers (RSE, specific topics)
- The staff of the ICT department (RSE, specific topics)
- The staff of the PE department (RSE, specific topics)

All staff are involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They are role models for pupils of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and pupils. They also contribute to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

### **External Visitors**

Our school will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always 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 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools'. Health professionals will follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

## **OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSE**

### **Governors**

- Responsible for the drawing up of this policy
- 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 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.

## **Head of Safeguarding and RSE Co-ordinator**

The Head of Safeguarding, Head-teacher and RSE co-ordinator has a general responsibility for the implementation of this policy and provide the lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSE.

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. All staff are aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND CURRICULUM SUBJECTS**

This RSE policy is delivered as part of the PSHCE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy, etc.)

Pupils with particular difficulties whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. 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 takes 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 a 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.

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.

## **SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE AT RISK**

A learning environment is fostered in which pupils feel safe and secure in their learning. Opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships are provided. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers are aware of the needs of their pupils and do 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 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.

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 explain to pupils that almost everything that they say in class/school is confidential but that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality in matters which are illegal or abusive, for instance. Teachers explain that in such circumstance 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

All governors, teachers, support staff, parents and pupils are aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The RSE Co-ordinator 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 programme will be evaluated annually by means of questionnaires and assessments given to pupils, and by discussion with pupils and staff. The results of the evaluation will be considered by the RSE co-ordinator. Any significant changes will be considered by the Governors before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.