

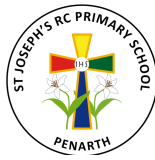


# St Joseph's RC Primary School



## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Date Reviewed	Date Approved by Governing Body
April 2022	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2021
October 2022	20 <sup>th</sup> October 2022



## **Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

This policy has been adopted by the Governing Body of St Joseph's RC Primary School and must be read alongside other Relationships and Sex Education guidelines.

### **2. Vision and Mission**

The vision of St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School is to provide a welcoming, loving and transforming community where the spirit of Christ lives. We support and guide our pupils in mind, body and spirit to live the Gospel as beacons of light to the world. Through excellent, creative and inspirational teaching, we aim to help all learners to realise their potential and develop a lifelong love of learning, enabling them to be happy, successful and fully rounded human beings.

Our Mission Statement is:

Jesus: in our hearts, in our minds, in our living, in our learning.

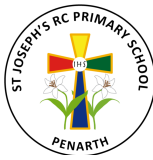
At St Joseph's RC Primary School, we are inspired by Jesus to be the very best we can be. We look after one another and show respect and love through our relationships with one another. Jesus is invited into our lives. In the Beatitudes, Jesus invites us to lead a full life with him by explaining what makes people blessed or happy. This is about understanding how loving our neighbour enables us to be fulfilled too. Therefore, having a good relationship with ourselves and the other people in our lives makes us grow and flourish and we respect that everyone is a unique and beautiful part of God's creation. We are all children of God, called to grow in love for him through the person of Jesus Christ and to spread the Good News through the action of the Holy Spirit.

### **3. Procedures**

The following groups have been consulted as part of producing this policy.

- staff
- governing body
- parents
- Diocesan Education Service
- Pupils

This policy was shared in draft form with the governing body, parents and carers, staff members and it was discussed with the Mission Ministry and Chaplaincy team from the St Joseph's School Parliament.



In consultation with the Governing Body, the policy will be implemented in 2019, reviewed every (three years), by the Headteacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body, the school Staff and the School Parliament. The next review date is autumn 2022.

The policy will be circulated to all members of the Governing Body and all members of staff. The school prospectus contains a statement about RSE teaching and details of where to obtain a full copy of the policy upon request. The Diocesan Director of Education/Director of RE will be sent a copy of the school's RSE policy and it is the duty of the Governing Body to ensure that this is up to date.

#### **4. Rationale**

As a Catholic primary school in the Province of Cardiff, Menevia, Wrexham and Herefordshire, we use the term Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) as we believe that sex education is set in a wider context of relationship education that is about all aspects of growing a fulfilled and happy life. Sex education is but one dimension of this greater whole.

The defining belief of Christianity is that God took on human form. This endows the human person with an extraordinary dignity that goes beyond that of all other forms of life and shows that humanity alone can embrace this relationship with God. Therefore, our relationship with our own bodies is not casual – our bodies are the dwelling place, the 'temple' of the Holy Spirit. All teaching about love and sexual relationships in school is rooted in this belief which is expressed in the Church's teaching about relationships, marriage, sex and family life. The Church educates young people as part of complete human formation. Education about human love is no less a part of a Catholic school's responsibility than teaching about mathematics or the English language. At St Joseph's School, we teach young people about how to grow in relationships, including understanding loving relationships and acknowledging that children's first experience of love is in the home. We encourage children from the earliest age to recognise that they are all children of God and that each person shares a God-given dignity. As children mature, we encourage them to follow the example of Jesus and live lives inspired by the Gospel virtues, enabling them to follow His commandment to "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:31). This is the basis for all relationships in our school. Teaching about relationships in our schools is supported by Christian virtue teaching as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in line with 'Fit for Mission? Schools'.

Legal guidelines suggest that relationship and sex education should build on the children's own experiences, be sensitive to the specific domestic contexts the children come from, form attitudes and values towards relationships, develop personal and social skills and increase the knowledge and understanding of each young person as they grow about their relationships and well-being, including sexual health. We support all these aims in educating about relationships and sex education by incorporating them into the wider understanding of



human relationships and human formation as reflected in the relevant CBEW and CES RSE Guidance.

## **5. Statutory framework**

Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) as the Welsh Government refer to is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework and is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16.

Further information regarding the statutory framework can be found here:

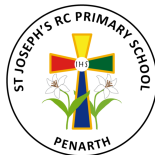
[https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/cross-cutting-themes-for-designing-your-curriculum/#relationships-and-sexuality-education-\(rse\):-statutory-guidance](https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/cross-cutting-themes-for-designing-your-curriculum/#relationships-and-sexuality-education-(rse):-statutory-guidance)

## **6. Virtues and Values**

Gospel virtues and values underpin the RSE curriculum. The Christian tradition describes behaviour or habits that lead to happiness, human flourishing and a closer relationship with God as virtues. These virtues are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and fall into two groups. The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (sometimes simply 'love' is used instead of 'charity') are about developing the habits of being open to the work of the Holy Spirit and developing a deeper relationship with God through living a balanced and good life. The cardinal virtues of practical wisdom (prudence), justice, fortitude and temperance help people develop habits of reason, fairness, emotional resilience and self-mastery. They are human virtues and, as such, are part of the development of people of all faiths or none as they learn how to flourish, thrive and to have a life supported by strong and caring relationships. The cardinal virtues are drawn from the teachings of Plato and Aristotle and are held in common with people of many faiths and secular beliefs. St. Thomas Aquinas attributes the theological virtues as having their foundation in God, they complete the cardinal virtues and are the way people can reach "the abundant life" (John 10:10).

At St Joseph's School, we live out the Gospel values shared in the Beatitudes, throughout the life of school by the explicit teaching of virtues education through the St Joseph's Pupil Profile and through our daily actions and interactions.

We expect all staff members to demonstrate Gospel values and virtues, and encourage pupils to do the same. We understand that our role as educators of the young is to support parents and carers in the formation of their children and know that children will progress in knowledge about moral behaviour throughout their time at school.



Our pupils are encouraged to say 'thank you' to God; and to demonstrate care about other people? We support and guide our pupils in mind, body and spirit to live the Gospel as beacons of light to the world.

Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their behaviour and give reasons for the choices they have made. They are given opportunities to learn how prayer enables them to make space for God in their lives and offers opportunities for reflection and growth.

As pupils progress through Key Stage Two they will develop a deeper understanding of what is moral behaviour and be able to say why this is important for personal happiness and for a closer relationship with God. Through their work as members of the School Parliament, all pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their understanding of the importance of providing service to others and to take actions to improve their school, their community and the wider world.

By the end of Year 6, pupils should be able to explain some behaviour choices by reference to their beliefs and values, for example, by referring to Jesus teaching about forgiveness.

## **7. The Aim and Objectives of RSE**

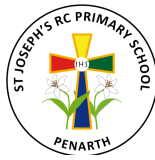
The aim of RSE is part of our aim to educate the complete human person. This is expressed in *Fit for Mission? Schools* (2009) as follows:

*The fundamental needs of the human person are the focus of Catholic education – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual, and eschatological (Our eternal destiny). These fundamental needs can only be truly fulfilled through a rich and living encounter with the deepest truths about God and the human person.*

*This is why Christ and His Gospel must be the foundation of the educational project of each school and college, because He is 'the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection' (Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*). Therefore, the Catholic school or college is called to keep the Gospel whole and alive amongst pupils, families, and staff.*

RSE should therefore deepen the following areas of understanding:

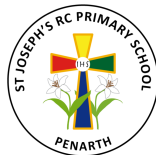
- To develop self-knowledge, and respect and love of self;
- To invite young people to develop and deepen a loving relationship with God;
- To invite young people to understand that their life has a purpose;
- To invite young people to develop and deepen relationships with each other based on mutual respect and care and to understand this is an expression of God's love;



- To foster an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church about how to live a full life, a life of virtue, and the place of human sexuality in living a full life, marriage and parenthood that is appropriate to the stage of maturity of the young people;
- A strong awareness of their own safety and the nature of appropriate consent;
- To have an understanding of the law in England and Wales about Equality and Marriage, appropriate to age and maturity.

Through our curriculum and extra-curriculum work:

- we will seek to develop attitudes of awe and wonder for the gift and beauty of self, respect for each other as children of God and rejoice in the goodness of God's creation.
- we will seek to develop attitudes of responsibility towards ourselves and others, recognising the dignity in all.
- we will seek to enable children to understand the choices they make and how they can help or harm themselves and others.
- we will encourage children to learn about expressing their emotions and be respectful of the emotions and behaviours of others.
- we will encourage the whole school to be like a loving family recognising God as a merciful and generous father as Jesus taught in the Lord's prayer.
- we will encourage everyone in the school to recognise their part in the school family and work together for reconciliation when relationships in the school falter.
- we will encourage everyone in the school to value humility, mercy and compassion and to respond with empathy to the problems of others.
- we will develop children's knowledge of when to say 'no' to behaviours or attitudes that harm their dignity or the dignity of others and to be responsible for their own safety.
- we will develop children's experience of what it is to be happy so that they begin to understand the difference between happiness and gratification and value patience.
- we will teach children about the media and their choices, about what to watch, what games to play, what rules apply and that the dignity of all does not just apply to people who are physically seen, it applies to online relationships too.
- we will support children when relationships in their lives are challenging and teach them that there are people in school who will listen if they are experiencing changes that make them frightened or uncomfortable.



- we will foster an atmosphere in school which celebrates the work of the Trinity through the life of the school and its relationship with the Church.
- we will teach children about the beauty of the Church's teaching about love and God's love for them which is shared in the Sacraments.
- we will sensitively share the Church's teaching about the importance of marriage and family life as a way to live in loving relationships with others and with God.

## **8. Inclusion**

At St Joseph's School, we identify that young people mature in different ways. Our teaching about relationships and sexuality is respectful of each child's starting point, their faith, culture and background. Lessons are framed by this understanding and young people encouraged to respect each other in their differences and develop an approach of dialogue.

## **9. Equality**

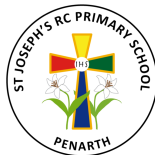
The governing body has wide obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and will work to ensure that St Joseph's RC Primary School endeavours to do its best for all of the pupils, irrespective of ability (physical and mental), race, ethnicity, nationality, maternity, pregnancy, sex, gender identity or orientation or whether they are looked after children.

The School has an Equalities Plan which is reviewed every three years and every policy Equalities Statement.

## **10. Programme of study**

The Province recommends appropriate resources to its family of schools. These range from ages 3-19 years and provide suggested areas of study and outcomes for the young people it serves. It is envisaged that this programme will be taught in discreet lessons, in cross curricular lessons, particularly R.E. and science and fundamentally embedded in the ethos of the school through assemblies, classroom discussions and the centring of all relationships in school on the person of Jesus Christ. The programme of study is based on the understanding of the Church of human nature and human sexuality, and aims to help young people develop their sense of purpose and character. It should be taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and will thus have room for the expression of alternative viewpoints by pupils.

RSE will be taught, using a wide range of teaching strategies, clear ground rules for discussions will be established, parents will be informed and lessons will always take account of the safeguarding policy. Lessons will follow the Corpus Christi Cluster Scheme of Work developed by PHSE Curriculum Leaders December 2018. All resources used will be recommended by the Archdiocese.



- Nursery to Year 6 will follow 'The Life to the Full' programme by Ten Ten.
- Reception to Year 6 will follow The Fertile Heart programme.

Pupil Wellbeing is monitored through usual school systems including:

- Listening to Learners
- Class observations
- Work scrutinies
- Analysis of the biannual SELFIE Survey
- Referral procedures for the THRIVE Programme
- Analysis of questionnaires and surveys
- Pupil Attendance and analysis of reasons for absence
- Implementation of school policies
- Procedures initiated by the School Parliament.

## **11. Parents**

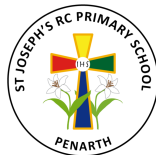
The Church recognises parents as the first educators of their children. Our schools assist parents in this task also in RSE, aiding and completing (where needed) the work of parents and furnishing children and adolescents with an evaluation of "sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God". (Educational Guidance in Human Love (1983) Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education n69). Children's first experience of relationships and love are in the home. At our schools we seek to work with parents and support them as their children grow and begin to develop their own character as well as experiencing changes in their physical appearance. Parents have been consulted about this policy as well as the RSE programme of study before it was ratified by the governing body.

The June 2021 version of this Policy was made available on the school website and parents and carers were invited to read it and provide comment. A printed copy was also made available in the School Office. The amendments to this policy have been due to statutory changes and an update of the RSE programmes that St Joseph's use. Parents have been informed about these amendments in an RSE workshop and via communication of this workshop as well as through the parent portal which allows access to our RSE programmes.

The Welsh Government have directed that RSE is mandatory under the Curriculum for Wales provision and parents no longer have the right to withdraw their children from RSE lessons. As a result, particular care has been taken to ensure that dialogue and involvement of parents is a priority concern of the school.

Parents and carers are informed that RSE lessons concerning sex education and puberty are taking place and dates of the lessons are shared as well as access to a parent portal which provides further information about the RSE programme.

The school will involve and support parents in learning about RSE by making available copies of the programme of study/published resources to be used; sending home letters when a



sensitive subject is to be taught; providing resources to use at home; and including information in school prospectus and on school website, listening to questions etc.)

Information about RSE is contained in the school prospectus and the majority of the programme of study is developed through the ethos of the school. However, at times, areas of particular sensitivity, such as puberty, will benefit from additional parental support and at such times, letters will be sent home and parents may be invited into school to discuss the content of RSE lessons.

## **12. Teaching RSE**

The school's RE & RSE Leaders will be responsible for the successful and faithful implementation of the RSE programme. This work will be monitored by the RE & RSE Leader, the SLT and RE & RSE link-governor.

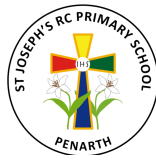
All teachers will be involved in teaching elements of the RSE programmes and professional learning is provided for teachers to support their teaching of this. All staff members are involved in fostering attitudes, living Gospel virtues and shaping behaviour based on a Christian understanding of how to lead a good life. Staff are called to be role models of the school's ethos in their relationships with other staff members, their conduct towards parents and their care for the children in the school. Staff who are not Catholic themselves must conduct their behaviour in school in accordance with the vision and mission of the school.

Teaching and learning about human relationships will be part of the life of the school. However, the programme of study will be taught through cross-curricular dimensions where appropriate, such as R.E., science and computing.

Sometimes, the children's learning will be supported by using other agencies including visitors to school. Such visitors will be guided to read the protocol for visitors at St Joseph's School and will agree in writing to follow the instructions.

## **13. Supporting children and young people deemed to be at risk**

Like all other subjects, RSE always needs to be taught in a differentiated manner appropriate to the maturity of the children. It needs to be framed so that the young people who are participating know that there is pastoral support if any of the issues discussed make them feel the need to talk further or share confidential information. This should always be done within the safeguarding framework of the school and it is paramount that all staff teaching RSE have up-to-date safeguarding professional development.



Questions asked by students that are a cause for concern for the teacher, for example because of their explicit or graphic content, should be addressed in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy and confidentiality procedures.

The following guidance for dealing with questions in teaching RSE will be followed:

Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Many teachers are concerned about responding to unexpected questions or comments from pupils in a whole-class situation. Having a set of ground rules should reduce the chances of this happening but teachers will need support and training so that they are prepared for the unexpected. For example:

- If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as a school counsellor, school nurse, helpline, or an outside agency or service;
- If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the pupil or teacher or both together research the question later;
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the pupil will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the pupil later; and
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures, which are included in the school's Safeguarding Policy which can be accessed via the school's website and is available in print in the School Office.

(DfE Sex and Relationships Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000)