



**ST MARY'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

May 2017

'Love One Another as I have Loved You'

Rationale and Context for Education in Sex and Relationships

Following the Guiding Principles, the Catholic character of the school **requires** that, in the specific area of Education in Sex and Relationships, the leadership and management of St Mary's Catholic Primary school, working with foundation governors, will:

- **ensure** that the school seeks to remain faithful to Catholic belief and teaching on matters of faith and morality.
- **promote** Catholic belief and teaching concerning human dignity and relationships and, in particular, encourage an understanding of and respect for the sanctity of human life, the virtue of chastity, and the sacrament of marriage.
- **oversee** the delivery of education in sex and relationships to guarantee its faithfulness to the belief and teaching of the Catholic Church (this includes the content of teaching and resources) so that it excludes anything which risks reducing the understanding of sexuality to the level of a mere bodily function, biological process or recreational activity.
- **recognise** the primary role of parents in the education of their children and, 'in particular, sex education is a basic right of the parents and must always be carried out under their close supervision.'¹ The school recognises that education in sex and relationships is done in the name of parents, with their consent and with their authorisation. Consequently, any school based education in sex and relationships must always be carried out in direct consultation with parents.
- **demonstrate** pastoral sensitivity for the cultural, personal and family circumstances of children and young people while maintaining the integrity of Catholic belief and teaching.
- **enable** the formation of children and young people through a consistent application of Catholic belief and teaching on matters of faith and morality across the whole curriculum and from all staff.
- **monitor** the involvement and teaching of external agencies/visiting speakers, and the distribution of resources within school provided by them – in order that all presentations and content are in accordance with the belief and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Following the Guiding Principles, the leadership and management of the school, working with governors, and giving due regard to the Catholic character of the school, will ensure that in the specific area of education in sex and relationships, St Mary's Catholic Primary school **promotes**:

- (a) An approach that presents the teaching of the Catholic Church on matters of sex and relationships, rooted in the biblical presentation of the human person who is made in the image of God to love and to be loved, as a positive and consistent ethic for life encouraging pupils and young people to enter into proper and fulfilling relationships. Such an approach will guard against a discouraging and negative presentation of Catholic Church teaching which comes across as a series of random and arbitrary prohibitions.
- (b) A developmental approach which gives gradual and positive education in sex and relationships to enable children and young people to have accurate information, seek to develop a properly formed conscience to make right judgements, and to take right actions in the many and varied situations in which they may find themselves. Pupils and young people will need time to reflect on what they are taught. They will need to ask questions and articulate their thoughts and anxieties in a context of respect and trust.
- (c) A whole person approach which accepts that pupils and young people are sexual beings who have received their sexuality as a gift from God and which is something essential to personal identity: 'Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being ... of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love. Therefore it is an integral part of the development of the personality and of its educative process'.² Catholic schools have a responsibility to ensure that the information given to pupils and young people is received in the context of the teaching of the Catholic Church and, therefore, based on sound theological principles. This positive approach excludes anything which risks reducing the understanding of sexuality to the level of a mere bodily function, biological process or recreational activity.
- (d) A whole school approach to education in sex and relationships which is transmitted in the context of the Catholic life of the school through a cohesive set of guiding principles which are informed by the mission statement and flow from the Gospel of Christ and the virtues. 'Pupils and young people will have different maturation rates and different levels of sexual awareness. The pressures on them, from society and the media, often subliminal, cannot be underestimated. The school must be ready to accompany them on their journey to adulthood, modelling for them and enabling them to become capable of right and proper relationships. Consequently, while a senior member of staff should be responsible for the development and co-ordination of the necessary programmes, it is a responsibility shared by the whole staff, with the whole range of the curriculum contributing to the formation of right moral attitudes in our children and young people'.³

- (e) Loving relationships between people so that the love experienced by pupils, students and staff is founded on the Christ-centred impulse to love and to be loved.
- (f) A framework for living out these relationships anchored in the principles which flow from the Gospel and the practice of the virtues: faith, hope, love, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, chastity; and the fruits of the Holy Spirit, charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, and self-control.
- (g) All that is worthy in relationships such as love, respect, honesty, generosity, kindness, gentleness etc and rejects abuse and exploitation.
- (h) An approach to human life which promotes its God-given dignity, goodness and sanctity, its joy and wonder and seeks to awaken pupils and students to their most creative possibilities so that gifts and talents can be placed at the service of God and the community.
- (i) The positive presentation and encouragement to live modestly by respecting the dignity of oneself and others, especially with regard to our sexuality, and with chastity which can guide us to make personal choices which are responsible, mature and recognise that sexual intimacy is for the purpose of love and new life within marriage.
- (j) Respect for the child's sense of delicacy and privacy concerning sexual matters, and protection of children and young people from lessons or materials in human sexuality which are explicit, premature or misleading.
- (k) Marriage as the equal union of man and woman who love each other and commit to each other before God and the community. Marriage is the place for the sexual expression of loving intimacy which is open to life. Christian marriage expresses the truth about love and can serve as a prophetic proclamation of a human being's real needs: that a man and a woman are called upon from the beginning to live in a communion of life and love, and that this communion leads to a strengthening of the dignity of the spouses, the good of the children and of society itself.

Statutory Requirements

The Education Act of 1996 consolidated all previous legislation (Education Acts 1983, 1986, 1993) concerning education in sex and relationships. This was supplemented by the Learning and Skills Act and informed by the DfEE 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' both of which originate from 2000. The last Government (in power until May 2010) intended to make 'Sex and Relationship Education' (SRE) mandatory in Primary schools by making Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education (of which SRE outside of the National Curriculum Science Order is a

part) statutory for all pupils in Key Stages 1 to 4. This intention did not pass into law. The present government's Education Bill will not make SRE mandatory in Primary schools.⁴ Therefore, arrangements for SRE that have been in place since the Education Act of 1996, the requirements in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (one of which is for headteachers and governors to have regard to the DfEE guidance on SRE) and the subsequent guidance from the DfEE entitled 'Sex and Relationship Education' (2000) forms the context for the statutory requirements on schools in respect of SRE. Below is a chronological list of the statutory and curriculum responsibilities for primary and secondary schools followed by a summary.

The Education Act 1996

Primary and Secondary: the National Curriculum (NC) Science orders which teach sex education are mandatory for all pupils. These cover: anatomy, puberty, biological aspects of sexual reproduction and sexual health.

Primary: governing bodies of maintained schools providing primary education must decide whether sex education should be included in their school's curriculum and, if so, what it should consist of and how it should be organised. When sex education is given it must encourage pupils to have regard to moral considerations and the value of family life. They must keep a written record of their decisions and consult parents about their SRE programmes.

Primary and Secondary: PSHE, which can include SRE, (outside NC Science and information about STI and HIV/AIDS) is not statutory. All governing bodies must have a written statement of whatever policy they adopt on SRE and make it available to parents free of charge.

Learning and Skills Act 2000

Primary and Secondary: the Secretary of State must issue guidance designed to secure that when sex education is given to registered pupils in maintained schools they learn the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children and they are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned.

Headteachers and governors have a statutory responsibility to have regard to the non-statutory 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance', DfEE 2000 when developing their SRE policy. This guidance replaced circular 5/94 and took account of the new PSHE framework (2000) and the Social Exclusion Unit report on teenage pregnancy. It is important to note that the guidance from the DfEE is not a list of what is legally required, only of what must be considered. Therefore, governors must read the guidance and declare that their Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships policy has been developed with regard to the DfE guidance.

'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' DfEE 0116/2000 (2000)

It is recommended that any SRE not delivered in NC Science is delivered through the PSHE Framework.⁵

Summary of Statutory and Curriculum Requirements

Primary Schools

Sex and relationship education, outside that taught in NC Science, is not at present mandatory for Primary Schools. Governing bodies and headteachers of maintained schools providing primary education must decide whether discrete sex and relationship education (SRE), beyond that set out in the statutory NC for Science should be included in their school's curriculum. Schools must keep a written record of their decisions. An up to date policy of the approach adopted on SRE (even if that is a decision not to teach SRE outside of NC Science) should be provided and made available to parents for inspection. If SRE is included in the curriculum, then the school should detail what it consists of and how it should be organised giving due regard to the PSHE education framework. If included, it should be taught in a way that encourages pupils to consider moral considerations, the value of family life, and learn of the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children. Pupils should be protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned. Schools should consult parents about their SRE policy and/or programmes. While 'sex education' is not statutory (outside of NC Science) at the primary phase, education for personal relationships is statutory in the Foundation Stage where the first area of learning is 'Personal, Social and Emotional Development'.

Definition of Education in Sex and Relationships

Introduction

Education in sex and relationships is founded on the Catholic understanding of the human person, relationships, marriage and the gift of sexuality revealed in Scripture and presented in Catholic Church teaching. The human person, with a unity and dignity that comes from God, is created for and called to a life of self-giving love expressed in relationship with God and with others. This authentic human love is always more than sexual expression for the human person is made in the image and likeness of God.

Definition

As a Catholic school, our role is to nurture the development of the whole person. Children, will learn about their spiritual, social, moral, emotional and physical development in ways appropriate to their age, level of maturity and developmental needs because their ability to form loving, caring, happy, strong, healthy, stable relationships is based upon this lifelong learning. Parents are the primary educators

in this regard. This development is also fostered in many areas of the school curriculum and includes aspects of character such as self-respect, confidence and responsibility, and fundamentally an understanding of oneself as a unique and beautiful part of God's creation.⁶ The centrality of self-giving love, the importance of love for relationships, including love's sexual expression in marriage is taught and promoted. The teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health will be placed in the context of Catholic Church teaching. Education in sex and relationships will reflect on and explore family life and relationships because it is in the family that children first experience love, affection, respect, saying sorry, forgiveness and other ways of relating to others.

It is in this Catholic context that the definition of SRE, given in DfEE guidance is understood. This guidance states that SRE is the 'lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.'⁷ Education for sex and relationships provided in this school will seek to build on the child's own experience, sensitive to the varied home background of individual pupils. It will incorporate through its aim, objectives, content, and teaching, the three main elements of SRE – attitudes and values, personal and social skills, knowledge and understanding within a Catholic context.

Aim of Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships

Catholic education in sex and relationships aims to support parents in their role as first educators of their children. Using a faith motivated person-centred approach the school will aim to ensure that all pupils, appropriate to their age, level of maturity and developmental needs, develop the necessary attitudes and values, the personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding to ensure that they have the capacity to make sound judgements, good choices and enjoy relationships based on love, mutual respect, dignity and responsibility free from any abuse or exploitation and to accept their own and others' sexuality in positive ways and as a gift essential to their personal identity.

Objectives of Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships

This aim will be achieved by generating an ethos in the classroom and throughout the school based on love, mutual respect, trust and confidentiality and by meeting the following objectives to enable children to

- know that they are a unique creation of God and so are able to grow in self-respect developing a positive attitude to themselves, their feelings and their sexuality

- understand that self-giving love is central to relationships
- recognise the importance of forgiveness and saying sorry in relationships
- understand the reasons for self-respect, and why they should act with respect and responsibility in their relationships
- reflect on their own relationships recognising those qualities that help relationships grow
- develop knowledge, communication skills and understanding in order to help personal decision-making
- act responsibly as an individual and as a member of a group
- identify and have the confidence to talk about their emotions and how to respond positively to them
- communicate a point of view clearly and appropriately and listen to the views of others
- take responsibility for oneself and for one's actions
- come to understand the influence and impact of the media, Internet, peer groups and develop the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately
- explore and respond appropriately to prejudice and gender stereotyping
- think positively about their own body
- understand, in ways appropriate to their age and developmental needs, the changes they will undergo including puberty
- know the correct vocabulary for external body parts, sexual organs, and menstruation
- think positively about other people, adults as well as children
- take care of themselves, their health, safety and personal hygiene
- know that some diseases are infectious
- keep themselves safe and ask for help and support when needed
- become aware of good choices and wrong choices and their consequences

- understand that some choices can entail undesirable outcomes, such as psychological distress, physical trauma, STIs, HIV/AIDS, abortion
- make good choices about what to do in particular situations
- manage relationships with friends confidently and effectively
- develop the ability to form positive, non-exploitative relationships and reject bullying
- explore and reflect on their own experience of people who are married
- have an understanding of the family, an appreciation of the values of family life and the roles and responsibilities of family members
- have an understanding of a family as a spiritual community in which members can grow in faith, hope and love
- understand that the difference between male and female is part of God's loving and creative plan
- understand sexual behaviour and reproduction in the context of a loving and self-giving marriage avoiding its reduction to bodily functions
- understand the Church's teaching on sexual activity outside of marriage
- understand the Church's teaching on the distinction between sexual orientation and sexual activity
- understand the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception
- recognise and appreciate the Catholic belief in the importance of marriage for family life and the bringing up of children

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents

"Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents" (The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality, Pontifical Council for the Family, 1995).

We recognise parents as the first educators of their children. This is their right and duty, and flows from their natural relationship to each other and to their children.

We recognise that parents sometimes experience and express difficulty in discussing sex and relationships with their children. The school seeks to support, and not replace them in this situation. Support, understanding and advice will be offered to parents to deal with sensitive issues they may need to address.

- (a) The school will provide in advance full information to parents and opportunities for consultation and involvement in the Education in Sex and Relationships programme (see role of head teacher below).
- (b) The school sees Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships as an integral part of the religious dimension of school life and asks that parents, who may wish to withdraw their child from the programme, to discuss their intention, in the first instance, with the headteacher or the delegated senior leader. However, parents are entitled to withdraw their child (up to age 19) from any or all sessions of the programme and for any reason, except that taught within National Curriculum Science.⁸ Parents must inform the school in writing in advance if they intend to withdraw their child so that alternative and appropriate supervision can be made.
- (c) Parents' concerns or objections to the content or delivery of the Education in Sex and Relationships programme should be addressed in the first instance to the delegated senior leader or headteacher. Should this fail to resolve the matter then the school's complaints procedure should be followed and if necessary contact with the Governing Body.

2. Diocese

Guided and inspired by the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, we hold that the human person is a spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical unity. All education must be of the whole person. This Catholic school is part of a family of schools and parishes, and is established in order that the education of the children in this school can be taught as an integral part of the Catholic Faith.

It is part of the duty of the Bishop of the Diocese of Leeds under the Law of the Church (Can. 796-806) to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools in his area and with the Trustees of the Diocese to ensure that the formation and education provided in such schools are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine.

3. Governors

The Foundation Governors of Catholic schools are appointed by the Bishop in order to promote and safeguard the Catholic character of the school.

- (a) The governors of this Catholic school of the Leeds Diocese acknowledge and intend to promote the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church in the fulfilment of their ecclesial and statutory duties, for the benefit of the children in their care.
 - (b) They recognise that the parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children, and that parents have special rights and duties over education in personal relationships.
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The governors intend to comply with statutory requirements.

4. Headteachers and delegated responsibility

- (a) The headteacher has overall responsibility for implementing the Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships programme and its integration into the school's curriculum and Catholic life.
- (b) Headteachers have a particular duty to respect and support the primary role of parents in this field.
- (c) The headteacher may appoint a Coordinator for Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships – a suitable person appropriately trained. The headteacher or delegated senior person will ensure that any discussion or treatment of sexuality in the school curriculum is consistent with Catholic teaching. They will assist colleagues to acquire and present up-to-date knowledge of the vision and teaching of the Catholic Church in this field.
- (d) The headteacher or delegated senior person will provide parents with full information about the proposed Catholic Education for Sex and Relationships programme before it is initiated, and will obtain parental consent in respect of each child before the child is allowed to participate in the programme. Opportunities for consultation and involvement will also be offered.

5. Staff

- (a) Teachers and all those contributing to Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships are expected to work within the values framework as described in the guiding principles and policy document, in line with the school's ethos.
- (b) Appropriate development and training facilitated by the Diocese will be undertaken. It will accord fully with the approach of the Catholic Church and take into account current statutory requirements.

6. Outside speakers; off-site elements

- (a) Any Catholic education in sex and relationships provision will be based in-school or in a diocesan approved centre to maintain the closest link with parents. The Bishop's approval secured through the Office for Education and Schools will be obtained for alternative off-site provision, before the event.
 - (b) It is the intention that, in those circumstances where any person from outside the school is to talk to an individual pupil or group of pupils about education in sex and relationships, such persons will, under the supervision of an appropriately trained member of school staff, do so within the principles and guidelines of this policy with particular concern for the primary role of the parents of the child in this area.⁹
- (b) The involvement of the School Nurse or any on-site health clinic in education in sex and relationships must be set within the context of this policy. The

School's leadership have agreed the expectations and parameters for the work of the School Nurse or on-site clinic. No external agency can work in school and give advice that counteracts Catholic Church teaching. Equally, members of staff in this Catholic school do not give advice on contraception and other aspects of sexual behaviour contrary to Church teaching. In circumstances where a pupil or young person is at some risk, advice will be sought from the headteacher or delegated senior teacher.

Entitlement and Equal Opportunities

We provide a broad and balanced education in the sex and relationships programme for all pupils including those with special educational needs. We recognise that there are a wide range of pupils who may require particular support because of their learning needs or disabilities or who have social and communication difficulties or other needs. We recognise that learning and teaching methods may need to be adapted and specialist resources and training required. We shall ensure that children with special educational needs are not, at any point, withdrawn from education in sex and relationships because of lack of resources and training or in order to catch up on other subjects.

This policy needs to be read and understood in conjunction with the school's 'Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan' (Equal Opportunities) policy.

Organisation of Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships - time allocation/pupil grouping, cross-curricular links

Schools will need to include their own arrangements in this section including how it is organised, who delivers education in sex and relationships – staffing (both teaching and support) and the principal subjects involved (RE, PSHE, Science etc) together with cross curricular links

Consider the following points:

Which Staff will teach it?

The suitability of individual members of staff

Staff training - to provide guidance about the teaching of the Catholic Church and to address such questions as confidentiality, maintaining boundaries and disclosures.

Guidance on the use of and the monitoring of outside speakers and agencies

Where is it in the curriculum?

In Religious Education, Science, PSHE, and Citizenship

For the wider picture a regular whole curriculum audit and on-going monitoring is required

Curriculum Content

Schools will need to detail the content of their programme – their commercial resource, or school-based programme and the topics/subjects covered in each Year Group

Learning & Teaching Styles

Schools will need to outline the learning and teaching styles used within education in sex and relationships. The School's use of the outlined learning and teaching styles respects the child's sense of delicacy and privacy concerning sexual matters, and protects children and young people from lessons in human sexuality which are explicit, premature or misleading.¹⁰

Assessment, Recording & Reporting

Schools need to indicate whether assessment is formative or summative or both. Schools will need to indicate how assessment judgements are recorded and reported.

Training & Provision of Resources

Schools outline here what funds are made available for the provision of in-service training and the purchase of resources. Schools outline the providers of training and advice.

Co-ordination with Primary or Secondary school(s)

Schools should indicate the arrangements for liaison with primary feeder schools or secondary school in order to achieve planned curriculum progression and continuity.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Teachers and other members of staff cannot promise complete confidentiality. Disclosures by pupils and young people to members of staff that indicate that they are being abused or are at some risk of abuse will be referred by those members of staff to the person responsible for safeguarding in the school. The school will always follow local authority procedures when dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues.¹¹

Statement about confidentiality and safeguarding which also refers readers to the school's confidentiality and safeguarding policies.

Arrangements for Monitoring & Evaluating Effectiveness

Schools outline who will monitor the programme and how it will be monitored. How the outcome of the monitoring will inform future effectiveness of the programme.

Policy Review

To be reviewed in September 2018