

Relationship and Sex Education Policy



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Governors' Committee Responsible:	The Trinity Catholic School FGB
Nominated Lead Member of Staff:	Tim Pickup
Status & Review Cycle:	Every 2 years
Next Review Date:	December 2025
Author/s	Tim Pickup

Approvals

This policy requires the following approvals:

Date Approved	Version	Review Date
	Second Version	

Relationships and Sex Education

'To the Glory of God, we build our school on faith, love and respect.' (Mission Statement)

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE). We set out our rationale for and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

In the preparation of this policy, consultation was made through:

- review of RSE curriculum content with staff and pupils
- consultation with school governors
- consultation with OLoL CMAT representatives
- consultation with parents
- Guidance taken from the following documents: 'A Model Catholic Secondary RSE Curriculum' (CES, 2019); 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education' (Department for Education, 2019); 'Male and Female He Created Them' (Congregation for Catholic Education, 2019); 'Learning to Love' (Department of Catholic Education and Formation, 2017); 'Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love)' (2016)

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors in the Lent Term 2024.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head teacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and Staff. The next review date is Lent Term 2026..

Dissemination

The draft policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's online prospectus and a copy is available in the school office. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the school's website.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

The aim of the new statutory guidance on RSE is to "give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed."¹

¹ 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education', Department for Education, 2019

The topics required for study are:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- The law as it pertains to the areas outlined above.
- Mental well-being
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

As Trinity is a Catholic school we follow the additional guidance outlined by the Catholic Education Service which states that '[a]ny teaching about love and sexual relationships in a Catholic school must be rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching about what it is to be truly human in Christ, what it means to live well in relationship with others and be presented within a positive framework of Christian virtue.'² It is also recognised that '[w]hilst promoting Catholic virtues, schools should ensure that children and young people are offered a broad and balanced RSE programme which provides them with clear factual, scientific information when relevant and meets the statutory requirements placed on schools.'³ This curriculum will follow three key themes identified by the Catholic Education Service:

1. **Created and loved by God** (this explores the individual)
The Christian imperative to love self, made in the image and likeness of God, shows an understanding of the importance of valuing and understanding oneself as the basis for personal relationships.
2. **Created to love others** (this explores an individual's relationships with others)
God is love. We are created out of love and for love. The command to love is the basis of all Christian morality.
3. **Created to live in community – local, national & global** (this explores the individual's relationships with the wider world)
Human beings are relational by nature and live in the wider community. Through our exchange with others, our mutual service and through dialogue, we attempt to proclaim and extend the Kingdom of God for the good of individuals and the good of society.

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. (There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. This does not apply to academies). However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

² 'A Model Catholic Secondary RSE Curriculum', Catholic Education Service, 2019

³ *ibid*

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 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. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

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, respect, acceptance and compassion.

AIM OF RSE AND THE MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour to raise pupils’ self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes towards others in society, particularly those who are most vulnerable. It is in this context that we commit ourselves:

In partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a 'positive and prudent sexual education'⁴ which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual age and 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;
- recognising false beliefs and prejudices that underlie stereotypes and discrimination
- 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, acceptance 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;
- how to care for and protect emotional, spiritual and mental well-being
- the centrality and importance of virtue in guiding human living and loving;
- the physical and psychological changes that accompany puberty;

⁴ 'Gravissimum Educationis' 1 (Declaration on Christian Education), 1965

- the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation;
- how to resist pressures from society or other people to engage in behaviours the individual is emotionally, mentally and physically unprepared for;
- 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.

Outcomes

- pupils are able to articulate and engage with a wide range of issues surrounding relationships and sex education in preparation for entering society as informed young people;
- pupils feel confident in explaining their own beliefs and values in the light of Catholic Church teachings and have considered their own positions;
- pupils have produced written evidence of their learning and have self-evaluated their understanding of the topics covered;
- the knowledge, understanding and personal and social skills identified above have been acquired in accordance with their abilities and levels of maturity.

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.

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 *all aspects of the statutory guidance outlined by the DfE in 2019*. An overview of the topics to be covered in each year group is outlined below with Sex Education topics highlighted in **bold**:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
1. Respectful relationships 2. Families 3. Citizenship 4. Online and Media 5. Changing Adolescent Body 6. Intimate Relationships 7. Mental Wellbeing	1. Citizenship 2. Respectful relationships 3. Internet safety and harms 4. Drugs and tobacco 5. Physical health and fitness 6. Healthy eating 7. Ten:Ten Programme	1. Respectful relationships 2. Families 3. Intimate relationships 4. Alcohol 5. Basic first aid 6. Citizenship	1. Intimate and sexual relationships 2. Respectful relationships 3. Being safe 4. Mental wellbeing	1. Online and media 2. Health and prevention 3. Alcohol 4. Citizenship

PROGRAMME / RESOURCES

An appendix to this policy provides further information about the breakdown of how RSE is taught across the school curriculum.

We use RSE-specialised curriculum resources from:

- PSHE Association
- Ten Ten Theatre (made specifically for Catholic Schools)

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- reflection
- experiential
- active
- film & video
- group work
- values clarification

ASSESSMENT

Assessment of pupils' learning will be through discussion work, verbal questions and answers and their own self-evaluation. Since RSE is not a discrete subject, it will be not reported in the same way as other areas of the curriculum. However, as RSE will be primarily delivered by our own staff, we will contact parents where we have any concerns that we need to discuss.

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 support parents and carers by providing material to be shared with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more. Parents/carers will be informed 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.

Parents must be consulted before this policy is ratified by the governors. They will be consulted at every stage of the development of the RSE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents continue to have ***the right to withdraw*** their children from Sex Education, except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. 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. Detrimental effects that withdrawal may have on a child include social and emotional effects of being excluded and inaccurate, misleading information being conveyed by their peers. Parents have the right to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.⁵

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 (in secondary schools/academies relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). 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

⁵ 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education', Department for Education, 2019

teaching. We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

Governors have a responsibility for ensuring that there is a Relationships and Sex Education Policy which is accessible by parents and consistent with Catholic Church teachings. Where necessary, they will provide guidelines for the teaching of sensitive issues. They will ensure that the policy is reviewed every two years.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher has oversight of the Relationships and Sex Education policy and will allocate responsibility for constructing and implementing the policy to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Senior Leadership Team

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will write, review and monitor the implementation of the Relationships and Sex Education policy.

Progress Coordinators

Progress Coordinators will choose age appropriate resources which competently deliver the necessary content of the course in an interesting, engaging and informed manner.

Form Tutors

Form tutors will sensitively deliver the pastoral scheme of work and remain informed of British laws and Church teachings.

Subject Leaders

Subject Leaders of RE and Science will meet National Curriculum and exam board requirements as well as providing specialist support and teaching in the delivery of Relationships and Sex Education.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING THE PROGRAMME

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lies with the Senior Leadership Team, Progress Coordinators and Form Tutors, as well as teachers in Science, Religious Education and Physical Education.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They will be role models for pupils of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and pupils. They will also be contributing 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 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'⁶.

Health professionals should follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSE

Governors

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

PSHE/RSE Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator with the head teacher has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSE and the provision of in-service training. *(They may be supported by the curriculum deputy and the member of staff with responsibility for child protection).*

All Staff

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

⁶ CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2016

spiritual well-being of their pupils. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE. All staff have been included in the development of this policy and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND CURRICULUM SUBJECTS

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, 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, as would be the case in other areas of the curriculum.

Learning about RSE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSE audit.

CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. They want to ensure that pupils can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. (See also Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions, Page 23 for more detail.)

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

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their pupils and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a child or young person is a victim of or is at risk of abuse they are required to follow the school's

safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

SAFEGUARDING THROUGH THE CURRICULUM

We readily review and adapt our curriculum in order to ensure topics effecting our young people are addressed within the classroom or in our assembly programme. Members of our safeguarding team will use CPOMS to analyse any trends in the logging of safeguarding incidents and where appropriate use this to inform how RSE topics are addressed in the curriculum.

We update our curriculum in relation to updates in Keeping Children Safe in Education⁷. For example, the recent Filtering and Monitoring updates of the new guidance has encouraged has to further highlight the importance of online safety and consent with our staff and students.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE

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

All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, will have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstance they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

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 by means of questionnaires, response sheets, needs assessment given to pupils, and/or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

OUR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

In order to help the delivery, planning and resourcing of our curriculum we seek guidance from and work closely with a number of organisations such as:

⁷ Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)

Nottingham City Council

Local Authority Prevent Team

Zebrared

PSHE Association

Nottinghamshire Police

Ten:Ten

Appendix A: How RSE is taught across the curriculum

Year	Subject	Focus	When Taught	Duration
7	Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reproductive organs sexual intercourse fertility treatment periods/ menstrual cycle being pregnant a healthy foetus giving birth growing up/ puberty 	Spring term	3 weeks
7	Pastoral time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People we can talk to being body conscious puberty resisting pressure 	First half of spring term	6 weeks
7	RE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our bodies change our feelings change the image of God & sexuality 	Last half of summer term	2 weeks
8	Pastoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family 'Faith in Families' 	Summer term	5-6 weeks
9	Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision of year 7 and 8 topics 	End Feb	1-2 weeks
9	RE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marriage and commitment 	Last half of summer term	2 weeks
10	Pastoral time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catholic teaching on sex resisting pressure for sex what is love? why get married? attitudes to sex waiting for sex 	Last half of autumn term	6 weeks
10	Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IVF cloning genetic engineering 	Autumn term (on rotation)	4 weeks
11	RE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Love marriage Church teaching on dignity of sex pre-marital and extra marital sex contraception divorce STDs/HIV 	First half of autumn term	6 weeks
12/13	General RE and pastoral time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexuality and morality family 	on rotation over the year	3 weeks