



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic First School Academy

Relationships & Sex Education Policy



Our Mission: 'Love God and Love One Another'

Statement of Aims and Beliefs:

In accordance with our Mission Statement "Love God and Love One Another" and the Gospel Virtues, which are central to our Catholic ethos, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic First School Academy aims to be a loving community which is inspired by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. The school affirms that all children and staff are unique and should have opportunities to achieve their full potential to learn or to teach and to experience success in a broad, varied and balanced curriculum. The school aims to value all members of the school community including staff, children, parents, governors, directors, parishioners and visitors.

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that relationship and sex education 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. It is in this context that we commit ourselves to "positive and prudent relationship and sex education." (Declaration on Christian Education Vatican II 1965) It is characterised by a whole person, whole school, and developmental approach thus setting it firmly within our distinctively Christian vision of education.

In this policy the governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions for the delivery of RSE at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic First School.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION:

The DfE guidance states that "children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way". It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of herself or himself, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience.

In primary schools the focus should be on "teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children with adults." This would include the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS:

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. Whilst promoting Catholic values, virtues and teaching, we will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme.

RATIONALE:

‘I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL’ (John.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.

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 children, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual children in respect to children’s 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 children 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.

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;
- celebrating the gift of life-long, self-giving love;
- recognising the importance of marriage and family life;

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
- 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;
- 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;

RSE PROGRAMME:

We will deliver the RSE curriculum through the 'Life to the Full' programme provided by Ten Ten Resources. Life to the Full has been created in line with the Model Catholic RSE Programme by the Catholic Education Service, which has been highlighted by the Department of Education as a work of good practice. The entire programme is underpinned with a religious understanding that our deepest identity is as a child of God – created, chosen and loved by God. The programme is fully inclusive of all pupils and their families.

PARENTS AND CARERS

We recognise that parents/carers are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents/carers in educating their children. Therefore the school will support parents/ 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 able to view the policy on the website and can email the headteacher if there are any concerns, before the academy body ratifies the policy. They will be 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 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. Please refer to the DfE guidance Page 17 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

BALANCED CURRICULUM:

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.

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

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

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 SRE within PSHE.

HEADTEACHER:

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 are 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 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.

PARENTS/CARERS:

Recognising that parents/carers are the primary educators of their children the school will seek to support them in this task. Parents have the right to be consulted before this policy is ratified by the Academy Representatives. 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. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher.

Relationship to other policies / initiative:

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework and thus contribute to the school's National Healthy School Standard. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is cross-referenced to the Safeguarding policy.

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 children, 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 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 children 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.

Confidentiality and Advice:

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, 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.

Monitoring, review and evaluation:

The PSHEC/RSE Coordinators, with support from SLT, will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work, samples of pupils work and holding pupil discussions at regular intervals. 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.

Parents/carers will be issued with a hard copy of this Policy on request. This Policy will also be made available to parents/carers via the School's website.

Policy reviewed: February 2021