



St Paul's Catholic College

POLICY FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION

Reviewed	Autumn 2025
Approved By	Headteacher
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Relationships and Sex Education Policy Introduction

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”

RSE is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of themselves as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience.

RSE should “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).”

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE, which are statutory parts of the National Curriculum. There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.

RATIONALE

At St Paul’s Catholic College, we believe that every child is unique and made in the image of God. We are committed to the education of the whole person and to enable each child to realise their full potential as members of the community. In order to do that our students are educated to develop a range of rich relationships and, in that context, to gain knowledge and understanding of their sexuality as a gift from God. In this work, we recognise that parents are the first teachers of their children and we seek to work in active partnership with them.

Our approach to education for personal relationships is in line with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and we take inspiration from the following statements:

“Education is not and must never be considered as purely utilitarian. It is about forming the human person, equipping him or her to live life to the full – in short, it is about imparting wisdom. And true wisdom is inseparable from knowledge of the Creator, for “both we and our words are in His hand, as are all understanding and skill in crafts” (Wis 7:16). Pope Benedict XVI speech to teachers and religious, chapel of St Mary’s University College, Sept 17th 2010

“I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL” (Jn.10.10)

The Universal Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

“The human person needs to live in society. Society is not for him an extraneous addition but a requirement of his nature. Through the exchange with others, mutual service and dialogue with his brethren, man develops his potential; he thus responds to his vocation.”

“... they (children and young people) should receive positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex ... and young people have the right to be stimulated to make sound moral judgements

based on well-informed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment.” Gravissimum Educationis (para. 3) Second Vatican

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 our 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, 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 be understanding and appreciating.

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.

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 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.

As a Catholic school, our mission is to “promote the wellbeing and freedom of the whole human person, understood as created in the image and likeness of God”.

In the light of our Mission Statement the aims, principles and objectives of our RSE programme are as follows:

OVERALL AIM:

We are committed to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and 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. 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” which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- Sexuality is a gift from God.
- We are made to love and be loved.
- What we say with our bodies should reflect what we mean in our hearts and mind.
- Mature Christian sexuality involves openness and long-term commitment. This is most clearly reflected through the permanence of the sacrament of marriage.
- Genuine love is creative.
- Each person has a duty to inform as well as to follow their own conscience.

OBJECTIVES:

To develop the following attitudes and virtues:

- reverence for the gift of human sexuality and fertility
- respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others
- joy in the goodness of the created world and their own bodily natures
- responsibility for their own actions and a recognition of the impact of these on others
- recognising and valuing their own sexual identity and that of others
- celebrating the gift of life-long, self-giving love
- recognising the importance of marriage and family life
- fidelity in relationships.

To develop the following personal and social skills:

- making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity, and which are respectful of the individual's commitments
- loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships and loving, stable relationships free from exploitation, abuse and bullying
- managing emotions within relationships, and when relationships break down, with confidence, sensitivity and dignity
- managing conflict positively, recognising the value of difference
- cultivating humility, mercy and compassion, learning to forgive and be forgiven
- developing self-esteem and confidence, demonstrating self-respect and empathy for others
- building resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups and so developing the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately
- being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

To know and understand:

- the Church's teaching on relationships and the nature and meaning of sexual love
- the Church's teaching on marriage and the importance of marriage and family life
- the centrality and importance of virtue in guiding human living and loving
- the physical and psychological changes that accompany puberty
- the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation
- how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

BROAD CONTENT OF RSE

There are three aspects to RSE:

- Attitudes and Values
- Knowledge and Understanding
- Personal and Social Skills

Delivery

RSE will be delivered in three inter-related ways:

- The whole school ethos, 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.
- Cross-curricular delivery. RS and Science predominantly delivery the content.
- PHSE tutor programme/timetabled Life skills lessons in KS3 and KS5.

Attitudes and Values

- To encourage students to become aware of their own attitudes and values and understand that these will affect the way they view themselves and others.
- To encourage growth in self-respect and self-worth recognising that each of us is created in the image and likeness of God.
- To enable students to understand that love (agape) is central and the basis of meaningful relationships epitomised through marriage and family life.

Personal and Social Skills

- To enable students to reflect on their relationships and to recognise the qualities that help relationships grow and develop positively.
- To enable students to recognise the importance of the choices they make and that they are responsible for the decisions they take.
- To help students resist negative peer, social and media pressure.
- To respect other opinions and lifestyle choices

Knowledge and Understanding

- To increase student understanding of themselves, their own bodies, their emotional development as they grow and change and their relationships with others.
- To explain the process of human procreation.
- To consider carefully responsible parenthood and family planning.
- To give careful consideration to the issue of homosexuality and sexual orientation.
- To inform students about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STI's).
- To enable young people to know and understand the legal framework relating to sexual activity.
- To learn the reasons for delaying sexual activity and for restricting sexual activity to marriage.

Long Term Plans, Schemes of Learning and Resources

Department long-term plan and schemes of work provide further information about the programme of study and suggested resources. Appendix A outlines which department is responsible for delivering each aspect of RSE.

Relationships and Sex Education – Ground Rules

In any classes considering issues of relationships and sexuality, whether they are delivered through R.E., Lifeskills, PSHE or Science, guidelines are always given to the students about the way in which the class will be conducted.

They are:

- Listen to people when they are speaking.
- Everyone has the right to 'pass' on a question.
- Only one person to speak at a time.
- Laugh with people not at them.
- Encourage people who are less confident.
- Respect other people's opinions.
- Use positive and appropriate language.
- No "put downs".
- No one should be put on the spot or feel threatened.
- Respect other people's right to privacy

External Visitors

Our school may 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'.

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. This will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

Role of Parents / Carers

Parents are also key figures in educating their children for relationships and sexuality. Therefore, parents are seen by the school as the primary partner in supporting the personal growth of an individual child. By working together, it is hoped that school and parents can realise the school's mission of 'Caritas' in caring for each student's personal development. This school/parent partnership will always be invaluable in nurturing Christian values in our young people, but it is particularly important for both the school and parents to have a shared understanding in relation to relationships and sexuality in the context of our present social climate.

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children from non-National Curriculum sex education (but not from Relationships and Sex Education generally).

The right of parents to withdraw their children ends three terms before their child's 16th birthday. From that point, it will be the child's decision.

INCLUSION

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.

In addition to the pastoral system of the school, support for students is also available from the Chaplaincy, school councillors and School nurse. In relation to their work, each of these follow the guidelines set out below-

- All professionals working at St Paul's Catholic College (whether teaching or medical) should be sensitive to the school's distinctive ethos and seek to present their advice in this moral context.
- All professionals working at St Paul's Catholic College should seek to bring the school and the home into a closer partnership for supporting young people.
- The school cannot offer a student complete confidentiality. The degree of confidentiality would always be governed by the need to protect the child.
- If a teacher or medical professional judged that a student's disclosure might raise the possibility of the child being at risk, that is, that there was "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm", then the Designated Safeguarding Officer must be informed. (See School Child Protection Procedures)

OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSE

Governors

- Agree the RSE policy
- ensure that the policy is available to parents
- ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g., SEND, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs
- ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children
- monitor and evaluate 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 and Lifeskills.
- 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.

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 appropriate agencies.

Deputy Head with responsibility for Lifeskills/RSE

The deputy head teacher takes responsibility for the implementation and impact of this policy.

Head of Lifeskills/HOD RE/HOD Science

These subject co-ordinators have general responsibilities 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.

All Staff

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.

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 (eg Anti-Bullying policy, Child Protection Policy).

Pupils with SEND 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.

Learning about RSE in Life skills 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 a matter of maturity, of personal involvement or the experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best-educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

Some questions may raise issues, which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child or young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE AT RISK

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.

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 circumstances 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 Head of Life skills, HOD for RS & HOD for Science will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils' work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated annually by the gathering of student voice, observations of lessons and by discussion with staff. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

Appendix A

Relationships & Sex Education	
Families	
That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.	RE
How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.	RE
What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.	RE
Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.	RE
The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.	Life Skills
The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.	RE
How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy.	Life skills
Judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships).	Life skills
How to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others if needed.	Life skills
Breakdown of relationships including divorce.	Life skills
Caring for others including Young Carers.	Life skills
Respectful relationships, including friendships	
The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.	Tutor/Life skills
Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.	Tutor/Life skills
How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).	English/Life Skills/Drama
That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.	RE/Assemblies/Retreat programmes/Life skills
About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying and trolling), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.	Computer Science/Life skills/Tutor
That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.	Life skills/Drama
What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.	Life skills/English
The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.	Life skills/Tutor/Assemblies/Retreat Programmes
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	

How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include: mutual respect, consent, loyalty, shared interests, sex and relationships.	Life skills
That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.	Life skills
The facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.	Science/Lifeskills
That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including: understanding pressure, resisting pressure and not pressuring others.	RE/Life skills
That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.	RE/Life skills
The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.	Science/RE/Life skills
The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.	Science/Life skills
That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).	RE
How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.	Science/Life skills
About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.	Science/Life skills
How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.	Science/Life skills
How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.	Science//Life skills
Being Safe	
The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.	Life skills
How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn, in all contexts, including online.	Life skills and Computer Science
Online and Media	
their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.	Computer Science, Life skills, tutor
about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.	Computer Science, Life skills, tutor
not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.	Computer Science, Life skills, tutor
what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.	Computer Science, Life skills, tutor
the impact of viewing harmful content.	Computer Science, Life skills,
that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.	Computer Science, Life skills,

That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.	Life skills
How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.	Computer Science, Life skills, tutor