



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

'Love God, Love Others, Love Ourselves'

Relationship and Health Education Policy



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Date of Ratification:	Summer 2025
Review Date:	Summer 2026

This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Headteacher and the School's Governing Body.

RATIONALE

"... children and young people should be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities.... They should receive a 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 a well-informed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment."

**Gravissimum Educationis (para 3)
Second Vatican Council**

'I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL'

(Jn.10.10)

RELATIONSHIP AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RHE)

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 her or him 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. As a primary school, our focus is on "teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults." This includes the topics of families and the people who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe. The delivery of Relationship and Health Education will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from, whatever their preferences and whatever their beliefs.

We have written this policy with God's love and inclusion at the forefront of our minds.

This policy has been informed by the following documents:

- Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance for schools DfE 2019
- Equality Act 2010
- Made in God's Image, CES, 2018 and 2021
- Amoris Laetitia – The Joy of Love, Pope Francis, 2016
- The Statement of Gender from the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, 2018
- Model Catholic Relationship and Sex Education for Primary Schools, CES, 2019
- Dignitas Infinita, 2024

"There is room for everyone in the Church and, whenever there is not, the, please, make room, including for those who make mistakes, who fall or struggle. There is room for everyone. Everyone. In the Church, no one is left out or left over. There is room for everyone. Just the way we are. Everyone. Jesus said this clearly."

Pope Francis.

AIMS

Our Relationship and Health Education (known hereafter as RHE) teaching is set within a moral framework and aims to inform and prepare the pupils of St. Mary's for life in the world in which they live. As a school, we recognise that parents have the prime responsibility in teaching their children how to build healthy loving relationships and we play a vital role in supporting parents/ The content of our RHE curriculum reflects the teaching of the Church, and is delivered to suit the age and stage of the young people in our school community. RHE encompasses many aspects of learning related to physical, moral and emotional development and supports children in their understanding of many types of relationships including marriage. The curriculum is based upon the God-given dignity of each and every pupil and through an understanding of the virtue, teaches our children how to make healthy choices which will benefit them for their entire lives. It will prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

RESPECT, LOVE AND CARE.

We aim to ensure our children understand and appreciate

- that every person that they encounter is “made in the image and likeness of God”
- that everyone is welcomed, accepted as they are, supported and loved
- the whole of creation as a sign of God's love
- the importance of respect for their own bodies
- the importance of mutually respectful and positive relationships within our lives, particularly friendship
- the importance of family life
- the importance of their own positive self-esteem and well-being.

RHE is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. Children are supported in understanding their own physical development and the importance of health and hygiene. We teach our children the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies and we aim to empower our children to be well informed and confident in the knowledge they have.

This will be achieved by

- providing a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- fostering an environment where children can ask questions
- creating a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- helping children develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff and parents. The consultation and policy development programme involved the following steps:

1. Review - a working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation - all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
3. Parent/Governors consultation - parents and Governors were invited to view the programme and policy and complete an online survey, providing feedback on the programme.

4. Ratification - following feedback and any amendments, the policy was ratified by the Governing body.

CONTEXT

While RHE in our school means that we give children information about relationships, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin our Catholic faith. In particular, we teach RHE in the belief that:

- it should be taught in the context of marriage and family life
- is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies
- they should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect.
- “Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in their very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state or situation the person may ever encounter” – *Dignitas Infinita 1*

TEACHING AND LEARNING

At St Mary’s, RHE is taught using the Catholic programme, ‘**Life to the Full**’ which has three areas of focus which are compatible with the three elements identified by the Department of Education:

Life to the Full	Department of Education
Created and loved by God	Attitudes and values
Created to Love Others	Personal and social skills
Created to love in the Community	Knowledge and understanding

The Ten:Ten programme was selected carefully as one which our children would be able to relate to and which will engage and inform them as they journey through St Mary’s and beyond. It is fully compatible with, and in fact goes beyond, the Department of Education’s Statutory Guidance which can be viewed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

these are taught in the following interrelated ways.

1. Through our whole school ethos linking to our mission statement **Love God, love others, love ourselves.**
2. Through the branches of our Religious Education Directory – To Know You More Clearly dovetailed with the Catholic Social Teaching Principles.
3. Through a cross-curricular approach as part of our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Science curriculums.
4. Through explicit teaching using the Ten:Ten curriculum – Life to the Full.

Foundation and Key Stage 1

Our children will learn about themselves as developing individuals and have the opportunity to build on their own experiences.

By the end of Foundation Stage, the majority of pupils should be able:

- recognise and name their feelings
- recognise the choices they can make, and recognise the difference between right and wrong
- talk about their family, home life and communities
- make simple choices that improve their health and well-being
- maintain their own personal hygiene
- name the major parts of the body
- recognise that everyone is special and should be treated with kindness

By the end of KS1 the majority of pupils should be able to:

- recognise, name and deal with their feelings in a positive way.
- recognise that we are uniquely made by a loving God, and that we have similarities and differences.
- understand that there are special people in their lives that they can trust.
- understand that families all look different.
- understand that people in our community are all different and have different beliefs.
- understand growth and the process of growing from young to old.
- know about the rituals that mark life, especially birth, marriage and death.
- know about the rules for keeping safe physically and online.
- have the skills to cope with various social situations and dilemmas.
- understand the importance of saying sorry and of forgiveness.
- have an awareness of personal health and hygiene.
- begin to be aware of the wider world and of their community, and the role they may play as part of God's family.

Key Stage 2

Our children will learn about themselves as growing individuals. As they begin to develop into young adults, they face the changes of puberty and it is important that they are taught knowledgeably and empathically enabling them to act as responsible young people who are able to make informed decisions about their relationships, sexual health and well-being.

In Lower Key Stage 2 they have the opportunity to:

- recognise that everyone has feelings and all feelings are valid.
- to develop strategies to enable them to cope with big and sometimes difficult feelings.
- learn strategies to support emotional wellbeing, such as practising gratitude and mindfulness
- develop their understanding of Life before Birth.
- develop a more complex understanding of different family structures.
- understand online safety and recognise their own responsibility when using the internet.
- develop an awareness about bullying and abuse
- deepen their understanding of the wider community, including the role of the Church and the Holy Trinity
- develop some first aid skills – knowing when to call Emergency Services

In Upper Key Stage 2 they have the opportunity to:

- appreciate emotional and physical differences as they recognise their worth as individuals by identifying positive things about themselves and their achievements.
- learn the skills necessary to cope with strong emotional feelings
- appreciate that life is precious and a gift from God.
- value themselves as a child of God, create a positive body image in that their body is God's gift to them
- develop an understanding of the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.
- explore a more complex understanding of physical changes in boys and girls bodies.
- understand the impact of the internet and social media on emotional well-being.
- have a more nuanced and scientific understanding of life in the womb and how babies are made, as well as the scientific facts around menstruation and puberty.
- understand the risks of chatting online, and the importance of online safety.
- know that pressure to behave in an unacceptable or risky way can come from a variety of sources, including people they know, and how to ask for help and support to overcome this.
- know what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable.
- be aware of different relationships and how to be effective in our relationships.
- learn the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation.
- develop a deeper and richer understanding of Catholic Social Teaching.
- develop basic first aid skills – all upper KS2 children receive training from I Can Save A Life and receive their First Aid Award.

We are aware of the pressures of the media, social networking and peers. We aim to foster positive self-esteem and body image so that children feel secure and confident in themselves. We encourage children to be aware of the effects their words may have on others and help them to become aware of the choices that they make.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**The Governing body**

The Governing Body will approve the RHE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RHE is taught consistently across the school, reporting to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RHE. The Headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the RHE programme, and ensures that all adults working with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and work within its framework. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring adequate training and CPD are provided regularly for staff.

The Staff

Staff are trained on the delivery of RHE as part of their induction and it is included in the continuing professional development calendar.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RHE
- Monitoring progress

- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RHE.
- Ensuring that children are taught in an inclusive classroom environment where any homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying is immediately challenged.
- Ensuring they attend CPD to develop their understanding and subject knowledge.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RHE and, when discussing issues related to RHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents

We understand that the primary role in children's RHE lies with parents and carers. At St Mary's we strive to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of our children through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

In promoting this objective, we:

- inform parents about the school's RHE policy and practice
- answer any questions that parents may have about the RHE of their child
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or Governors about this policy or the arrangements for RHE in the school
- Inform parents about the best practice known with regard to RHE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.

We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities. Parents have access to the online portal of our RHE programme, where they can view the curriculum and have controlled access to the curriculum at home. They have the opportunity to view the educational videos at home, before they are shown to the children.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within the RHE programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from RHE lessons, they should discuss this with the Headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Teachers conduct RHE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of safeguarding. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may be a victim of abuse. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Designated or Deputy Designated Lead Member of Staff for Safeguarding (Miss Egan and Mrs. Sharkey). The headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals (see 'Safeguarding Policy').

MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REVIEW

The RHE Co-ordinator (Mrs. Sharkey) 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 biannually by means of questionnaires and response sheets given to pupils, and 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.