



Saint GREGORY'S
Bath

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Key Information

Title	Relationship and Sex Education Policy	
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Checked By	Peter Irvine, Chair Curriculum & Achievement Committee	28 April 2020
Approved By	John Eddison, Chair Full Governing Body	12 May 2020
Version	V01.02	
Document Update	May 2022	

Version History

Version	Date	Amendments
V01.00	18.08.18	Draft Version
V01.01	11.09.18	Updated from FGB
V01.02	12.05.20	Updated from FGB

In Christ we flourish

Aims and Objectives

“The aim of 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.” DFE Statutory Guidance June 2019 Article 69

The purpose of Relationship & Sex Education at St Gregory’s is to help young people to recognise that human sexuality is a gift from God. It is concerned with the spiritual and moral as well as the physical and social. It should also equip them for adult life in which they can develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide judgements, decisions and behaviour. Education in sexuality and relationships is of paramount importance in our community today. More than ever do young people in our care need help and guidance in their struggle to live out their lives as members of the Christian family. We need to support young people, ensuring that they have the ability to accept their own and others’ sexuality in positive ways and build relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility free from any abuse. This will enable and empower young people to make informed and balanced judgements and decisions on matters of morals, both now and in the future. We must protect young people from inappropriate online content, cyber bullying, sexting and exploitation by giving them the tools with which to deal with it. RSE should be enriching and empowering and fulfil our duty to protect and safeguard our students.

Church Teaching

St Gregory’s, Bath, upholds the teaching of the Catholic Church of which it is part and seeks to deliver education for personal relationships in a sensitive and relevant manner to its students. We wish to reiterate that students will be led towards a full understanding of the Catholic Church’s teaching. The school takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible sex and relationship education (RSE) to all of its students as part of the school personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum very seriously. The school wants parents, carers and students to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of students, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the sex education provision.

By providing comprehensive RSE we are not encouraging students to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that students may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

“ . . . 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 Vatican II

This programme will convey the unity and coherence of Church teaching on human sexuality and the dignity of life. Church teaching will be communicated as a “consistent ethic of life”, not a series of arbitrary or random prohibitions since this miscommunicates the positive value placed by the Church on the value and beauty of human sexuality evidenced in the creation of Man and Woman, as representative of God’s own image (Gen 1:26).

The approach is to encourage young people to enter into a deeper relationship with God, themselves and others and is founded on a realisation that:

- every human life has an intrinsic and absolute value through being created by God and in the image of God;
- this value derives from the simple fact of existing and is not dependent on an individual’s age, abilities, social acceptability or any other characteristic;
- self-respect and respect for each other must underline all human relationships.

We teach Relationship and Sex Education because of our Catholic beliefs about God and about the human person. We are made in God’s image and therefore destined to live in relationships with others, to form community; called to love and be loved. In Jesus God became man and dwelt amongst us. He became human body and soul and there is no greater value that can be given to us. We are called to love because God first loved us. For most people that love finds expression in the self-giving of body and spirit. “Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being, of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love.” (Deus Caritas Est Benedict XV1 par5)

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

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise students’ self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We will teach students to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our students to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

“Pupils should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. They should be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing..... It can be underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual. These should include character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth.” DFE Article 72 &73

Statutory Curriculum Requirements

Students should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All students should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. When teaching about these topics, it must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. There should be an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same sex relationships. This should be integrated appropriately into the RSE programme, rather than addressed separately or in only one lesson.

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including, for example, marriage, consent, including the age of consent, violence against women and girls, online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.) pornography, abortion, sexuality, gender identity, female genital mutilation (FGM).

Implementation at St Gregory's

"We are not some casual product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary." (Pope Benedict XVI)

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.

To this end 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 students have a fundamental right to have their life respected, whatever household they come from. It will also prepare students for life in modern Britain. It will be taught within the context of RE lessons. The distinctive Catholic perspective will be taught whilst offering balanced debate.

Teaching strategies will include establishing ground rules, distancing techniques, discussion, project learning, reflection, experiential, active, brainstorming, film & video, group work, role-play, trigger drawings, values clarification.

As a school we subscribe annually to Ten Ten's new programme, **Life to the Full**, as a resource to teach Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church. The programme embraces "the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life" by giving students knowledge "that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships" (DFE Statutory Guidance). The framework of this programme is taken from 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.

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual students in respect to students' 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 students 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.

Safeguarding

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where students feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality and child protection, KCSIE, has been completed by all staff and is reviewed annually.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the school's **child protection and safeguarding procedure** should ALWAYS be followed.

If a staff member is approached by a student under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having, sexual intercourse or staff are approached by students with a concern about having contracted or possibly contracted a sexually transmitted disease should refer them immediately to the School Nurse, Family Liaison Officer and Director of Pastoral Care.

Students with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the SEN Coordinator/Director of Pastoral to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

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 and the school's own Visitor Protocol Policy. 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.

Withdrawal from RSE

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. The school will keep parents/carers informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum and urges parents/carers to read this policy. Parents can request access to resources and information being used in class and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents and carers are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school.

It is, however, a statutory right of parents or carers to withdraw the children in their care from the sex education content of RSE, except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should the student concerned be within three terms of their 16th birthday, the student themselves may make the decision to remain or be removed from RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education under the new DfE guidance. Should parents/carers wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Headteacher. 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)

Roles and Responsibilities

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 physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their students. 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 should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them. This policy should be read in conjunction with the PSHE policy and Safeguarding policy .

Governors have overall responsibility for the RSE policy, in consultation with parents, carers and teachers; to ensure that the policy is available to parents and carers; to ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g. SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs; to ensure that parents and carers know of their right to withdraw their children; to establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used; to ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE.

The Head of RE has a 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 have an overall responsibility in

ensuring resources are age and ability appropriate and uphold the Catholic ethos of the school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our aim is to provide RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our students, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason we review the RSE curriculum annually and will update any revisions to the school policy or sex education curriculum.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our sex education provision through:

- classroom observations
- departmental curriculum reviews
- student voice
- work scrutiny

The Head of RE, link governor and PSHE co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of students' work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated annually by means of questionnaires/response sheets/needs assessment given to students, and/or by discussion with students, staff and parents/carers. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements.

Further information:

DFE Statutory Guidance June 2019 Article 69
CES - A model curriculum
Clifton Diocese – Frequently asked questions
Ten:Ten – Life to the Full