

ST. MARK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



RS(H)E POLICY

Written by: St. Mark's Catholic Primary School	Approval Level: Headteacher/Governor
Approved by:	Review Date: Sept 2026

RELATIONSHIP, SEX and HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

September 2025

***In a caring, Christian community, together we love, learn,
laugh and achieve.***

Rationale

‘I have come that you might have life and have it to the full’
(Jn.10.10)

We acknowledge that Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship, as well as Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), are all underpinned by a theology of relationship and are all encompassed in the title ‘Relationships, Sex and Health Education’ (RSHE).

Our belief in the unique dignity of the human person as made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in our school. Our approach to relationship and sex education therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church’s teaching of the human person and is presented positively and prudently.

Stemming from this vision of what it means to be human, we seek to educate the whole child: spiritually, intellectually, morally, emotionally, psychologically, and physically towards our understanding of Christian maturity.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE (and the Welsh Assembly Government) RS(H)E will be firmly embedded in the PSHE/RS(H)E 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 Relationship, Sex and Health Education will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the importance of the Sacrament of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Aims of RS(H)E

- To encourage pupils' growth in self respect, acknowledging we are all created in the image and likeness of God.
- To help pupils develop an understanding that love is the central basis of relationships.
- To help pupils to understand the nature of relationships and to encourage them to reflect on their own relationships and respect differences between people.
- To develop pupils' confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.
- To help pupils acquire the skills necessary to develop and sustain relationships.
- To offer sex education in the wider context of relationships.
- To ensure that pupils protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed.
- To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty.
- To help pupils to develop a healthier, safer lifestyle.
- To prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom/reign of God.

- To provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- To help pupils develop feelings of dignity, self-worth, self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- To create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- To teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

Policy Development

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

1. Review – RS(H)E Co-ordinator has reviewed the policy, 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/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties including the Diocesan adviser/schools officers were invited to share their thoughts about RS(H)E (questionnaires).
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their Relationship Sex and Health Education (KS2 questionnaires).
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

Statutory Requirements

At St Mark's Catholic Primary school, we must provide Relationships Education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

In teaching Relationship and Sex Education, we must have regard to Catholic Education Service guidance issued by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales 2017.

The statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996 Appendix A

The statutory guidance from the Department for Education Equality Act 2010.

Delivery of RS(H)E

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is taught discreetly and through our life style in school. It is also taught through the subjects of Religious Education, Science, PSHE and by way of a cross-curricular, integrated approach as a fundamental part of the Catholic Life of the school. Our RS(H)E curriculum ensures that content is relevant to the age, experience and maturity of pupils.

The new statutory guidance for Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me.
- Caring friendships.
- Respectful relationships.
- Online relationships.
- Being safe.

All elements of PSHE and Citizenship, whilst non-statutory at Key Stage 1 and 2, are covered throughout all areas of the curriculum. Significant aspects of RS(H)E remain part of the National Curriculum for Science as

stated below. These will be taught to all pupils. *(Parents are unable to withdraw pupils from such lessons.)*

Key Stage 1 (5-7 years old)

- *That humans move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce;*
- *To name the main external parts of the body;*
- *That humans grow from babies into children and then into adults, and that adults can produce babies;*
- *To recognise similarities and differences between themselves and other pupils.*

Key Stage 2 (7 – 11 years old)

- *That the life processes common to humans and all animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction;*
- *The main stages of the human life cycle.*

We acknowledge that every area of school life can potentially contribute to RS(H)E as the school, of its very nature operates through positive human relationships. We recognise, value and greatly appreciate the contribution made by all members of staff in deepening the quality of our Christian community.

Teachers will use their professional judgement when addressing issues in RS(H)E. Careful consideration will be given to the wide and varied experience and backgrounds of the pupils in their care.

While we operate a whole school approach to RS(H)E through our chosen programme, pupils in Year 5 will learn about the emotional and the physical changes of puberty. For this particular part of the curriculum, children will be taught together. A similar approach will operate in Year 6 when pupils will cover the life cycle and sexual intercourse.

Resources

We acknowledge that parents and carers are the key persons for children learning about Relationships and Sex; the foremost educators. Our role

and our programme simply complement their role in nurturing their children's human wholeness at an age appropriate level. However, the role of parents and our day to day interactions in school are currently supported by the following curriculum resources:

- *A Journey in Love by Sr Jude Groden (2020)*
- *Religious Education*
- *Varied Science resources from a range of sources*
- *PSHE Association*

Assessment Recording and Reporting

A record is kept in teacher's planning of the delivery of RS(H)E. The programme is assessed, monitored and evaluated by the co-ordinator in accordance with the school's monitoring and evaluation policy. Pupils are given the opportunity for self evaluation at an appropriate level for each year group.

Outside Agencies

The expertise of outside agencies may be used appropriately to *support* but not at the expense of the school's delivery. The school is particularly thankful of the help available from local diocesan agencies and charities such as Nugent Care Society, NSPCC, CAFOD.

Curriculum Continuity

The school has an ongoing dialogue with the RE Co-ordinator of St Mark's Primary School; RSHE, RE, Collective Worship, Spiritual, Moral and PSHE policies complement each other as appropriate. The curriculum map for all year groups is available upon request.

Safeguarding Procedures

The school has procedures to deal with any sensitive issues or children thought to be vulnerable. Staff will pass on any concerns of this nature to the designated child protection officer (S Bradshaw, L Ferguson, A Kelly, C Sellers) in school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body and Foundation Governors in particular recognise their responsibility to ensure the RS(H)E programme follows Diocesan principles and reflects the Church's teaching as outlined in "Learning to Love" the Bishops of England and Wales document 2016. They will approve the RS(H)E policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RS(H)E is taught consistently across the school and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from the non-statutory element of Relationship, Sex and Health Education in Year 6* (see right of withdrawal).

Staff

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RS(H)E as this forms part of the Teaching Standards. Any staff who have concerns about teaching RS(H)E are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RS(H)E in a sensitive way which complies with Church teaching.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RS(H)E.
- 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 RS(H)E.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RS(H)E and, when discussing issues related to RS(H)E, treat others with dignity, respect and sensitivity.

Parents

The Church has always recognised that it is the privilege and the responsibility of parents to educate and inform their children in all matters pertaining to personal growth and development particularly in the sensitive area of their moral education and sexual development. The

Church also recognises that many parents require help and support in this task from both schools and parishes.

The Governing body fully subscribes to the views expressed by the Bishops' Conference and will always ensure that:

- Parents are supported in their task.
- Parents are consulted and kept informed of the Relationships and Sex Education Programme; its contents, evaluation and review and any subsequent developments.

Right of Withdrawal

It is our hope that parents would wish their children to be involved in the schools positive and prudent programme of RS(H)E, following annual consultation regarding the school's approach. However, we recognise parents have the right to withdraw their children from such lessons (not included in National Curriculum Science) after discussion with Miss Bradshaw (Headteacher).

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing and addressed to the headteacher. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from RS(H)E.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Statutory Relationships Education as set out in the DFE guidance 2020.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored annually by the RS(H)E Co-ordinator (E.McHugh) and will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. Parents will be consulted before any proposed changes.

This policy has been formally adopted by the Governing Body of St Mark's Catholic Primary School. It will be reviewed by the Governors and Headteacher in conjunction with all the staff annually from the date below.

Signed..... (Chair of Governors)

Date.....

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