

# **St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy**



## **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy**

## **The Ethos of St Peter and St Paul**

"Our school is a community where Jesus Christ is our role model and his message the guiding principle behind all we do. Every member of our community is responsible for creating an environment that is caring, fair and respectful of each individual. We develop our potential, celebrate our talents and go forward together in faith."

Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. We are therefore committed to promoting:

### **The uniqueness of the individual**

We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God's image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God.

### **The search for excellence**

We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community, which flows from diversity of age, gender, racial and social origins, abilities, culture and religion. We are therefore committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

### **The education of the whole person**

We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help pupils to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the school serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

### **The education of all**

We have the duty of care for all to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically, emotionally or financially disadvantaged.

### **Moral principles**

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. We believe this is fundamental to the common good. We aim to prepare our young people to serve as witnesses to these moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

### **Consequently, we still strive to ensure that:**

Any person recruited to the service of the school, whether as a member of staff or as a volunteer, is made fully aware of our aims and objectives and required to support them;

Children who are admitted to the school and their families are fully aware of our aims and objectives and undertake to support them;

All of our structures and policies are evaluated and kept under constant review in order to see that no individual is subject in any way to unlawful discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, and to ensure that all are enabled to reach their full potential.

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## **Relationships & Sex Education Policy**

In this policy, the Governors and teachers in partnership with students and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE). We set out our rationale for, and approach to relationships and sex education in the academy.

This policy, and the curricula to be delivered, have been formulated and designed after consultation with;

1. Students Ambassadors
2. Safeguarding Lead
3. Parental/carers questionnaires
4. Senior Leadership Team
5. Heads of House
6. Personal Development teachers
7. Local agencies eg Lincolnshire Police

The curricula are also designed to be flexible. This enables us to react to local issues and deliver bespoke lessons if the need arises.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF POLICY**

Implementation of the policy took place after consultation with the Governors in the Lent Term 2021. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Headteacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and appropriate teaching staff. The next review date is 2025.

### **Dissemination**

The policy will be available to all stakeholders via the academy's website and a copy is available in the academy office. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the academy's website.

## **DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION**

The DfE guidance states that "Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development." 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. In Secondary academies

RSE should support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness. Effective teaching will support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right. (DFE guidance, 2025)

## **STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further

## **RATIONALE**

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 academy. 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;

# **'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'**

John 10:10

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 relationships 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 Personal Development framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of students. 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 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.

## **VALUES AND VIRTUES**

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 academy virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: love, friendship, confidence, faithfulness, self-control, respect, forgiveness and compassion.

## **AIM OF RSE AND THE MISSION STATEMENT**

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education.

Furthermore, our academy aims state that we will endeavour to raise students' 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.

## **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;

## **'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'**

John 10:10

- 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;

**'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'**

John 10:10

- 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.

## **INCLUSION AND DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING**

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.

## **EQUALITIES OBLIGATIONS**

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our academy strives to do the best for all of the students, 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. Students will be explicitly taught about the Protected Characteristics of the Equalities Act 2010.

## **BROAD CONTENT OF RSE**

Three aspects of RSE –

1. Attitudes and values
2. Knowledge and understanding, including how to access support
3. Personal and social skills

This will be provided in three inter-related ways:

1. The whole academy / ethos dimension;
2. A cross-curricular dimension;
3. Dedicated RSE content taught within the Personal Development curricula for two terms per academic year under the banner of *'My Relationships: created to love others'*

Our programme will cover...



## **PROGRAMME / RESOURCES**

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- discussion
- reflection
- case-studies
- brainstorming
- film & video recordings from experts
- group work
- virtue clarification

Students' understanding will be checked both verbally in class and via a short formal knowledge test at the completion of each term.

## **PARENTS AND CARERS**

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic academy, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Parents have been consulted before this policy was ratified by the governors. This was done by emailing parents and giving them the opportunity to raise concerns, and make comments. 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 academy in the RSE programme via the academy's Personal Development section of Sharepoint. At the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in the academy'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 academy 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 page 6 of the DfE guidance document '*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education*' (available [here](#)) for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)

## **BALANCED CURRICULUM**

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues.

Students will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE including forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality. Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with our academy's promotion of Catholic teaching. We will ensure that students have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

Within their Personal Development lessons pupils will learn the following:

**Year 7 Relationship Content TERM 2**

- Understand the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Understand that there are different types of committed relationships and family units
- Understand the concepts of privacy, boundaries and consent within a relationship
- Understand how to manage conflict within relationships
- Appreciate that friendships might not last and how to amicably end a friendship

**Year 7 Relationship Content TERM 5**

- Examine relationship values in both friendships and romantic relationships
- Explore what lays the foundation for successful romantic relationships
- The impact of social media and TV shows on relationship expectations
- Examine gender roles within romantic relationships
- Appreciate that all aspects of health can be affected by romantic relationships
- The facts regarding Female Genital Mutilation

**Year 8 Relationship Content TERM 2**

- Appreciate the qualities and behaviours they should expect and exhibit in a respectful relationships
- Further develop the skills of active listening, communication, negotiation, compromise and conflict management along with strategies to reconcile after disagreements
- How to manage the breakdown of a relationship (including its digital legacy) loss and change in relationships
- Develop strategies to identify and reduce risk from people online that they do not already know
- Know the services available to support healthy relationships and manage unhealthy relationships, and how to access them

**Year 8 Relationship Content TERM 5**

- To recognise bullying in all its forms and to develop the skills and strategies to manage being targeted or witnessing others being bullied
- Identify abusive behaviours, recognise warning signs, know how to report abusive behaviours and access support
- Recognise the impact of stereotyping and discrimination on individuals and relationships
- Understand the concept of prejudice
- Appreciate the need to promote inclusion

**Year 9 Sex Education Content TERM 1**

## **'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'**

John 10:10

- Appreciate the changes that are a typical part of growing up, with a focus on boys
  - Appreciate the changes that are a typical part of growing up, with a focus on girls
  - Know the law regarding sexual consent\*
  - Know about various types of Sexually Transmitted Infections\*
  - Know the different forms of contraception & how to access advice\*
- \*parents/carers should contact the headteacher if they wish for their child to be removed from these lessons

### **Year 9 Relationship Content TERM 2**

- How to recognise peer influence and to develop strategies for managing it, including online
- Understand that the need for peer approval can generate feelings of pressure and lead to increased risk-taking; strategies to manage this
- Know about the factors that contribute to young people joining gangs; the social, legal and physical consequences of gang behaviours
- Develop strategies to manage pressure to join a gang, exit strategies and how to access appropriate support
- Know about the motivations, and consequences of carrying weapons and strategies for managing pressure to carry a weapon

### **Year 9 Relationship Content TERM 5**

- To appreciate the importance of consent within intimate relationships
- To understand issues associated with sharing sexual images
- Appreciate the potential impact of viewing harmful media content
- To appreciate when comparison with others might be unhealthy

### **Year 10 Relationships Content TERM 2**

- Identify the characteristics and benefits of strong, positive long-term relationships
- To respond appropriately to indicators of unhealthy relationships
- Understand the rights and protections provided within long-term relationships
- Appreciate diversity in romantic and sexual attraction
- To understand the potential impact of the portrayal of sex in pornography

### **Year 10 Relationships Content TERM 5**

- To learn about fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women
- To appreciate the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- To know the available choices in relation to pregnancy
- To understand that there are different types of committed, stable relationships
- To appreciate the characteristics of successful parenting

### **Year 11 Relationships Content TERM 2**

- Appreciate & manage the strong emotions associated with the different stages of relationships
- Understand the opportunities and potential risks of establishing and conducting relationships online
- Know your rights and responsibilities in relation to online dating
- Able to recognise unwanted attention

**'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'**

John 10:10

- Know ways to access information and support for relationships including those experiencing difficulties

#### Year 11 Relationships Content TERM 5

- Deepen understanding of domestic abuse
- Increase knowledge regarding forced marriage and 'honour-based' violence
- Deepen understanding of Female Genital Mutilation

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING THE PROGRAMME**

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays, in the first instance with the Personal Development Team. In 2025-2026, this team consisted of;

Mr A Challenger (Lead)

Mrs Jenner

Mrs Gilbert

Mrs Fields

Mrs Pickup

Miss Taylor

Mr Canham

As referenced earlier, the delivery of RSE will also be cross-curricular in certain elements and as such members of the Science and Religious Education departments will also play a key role.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They will be role models for students of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and students. They will also be contributing to the development of students' personal and social skills.

## **EXTERNAL VISITORS**

Our academy 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. At present, we have a twice yearly visit from the Lincolnshire StaySafe Partnership who deliver further information on topics such as respectful relationships and stalking.

It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in academy delivering a session.

Health professionals should follow the academy'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.

## **OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSE**

### **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 academy policies, e.g., SEND, the ethos of the academy 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 RSE within Personal Development.

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Diocesan Academies' Service and the Catholic Multi-academy Trust.

### **Personal Development Lead**

Along with the Headteacher 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.

### **All Staff**

RSE is a whole academy 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 students. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the academy. 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 Personal Development framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the academy's other policy documents (for example, Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc) Students with particular difficulties whether of a physical or intellectual nature 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 students.

## **CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS**

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. They want to ensure that students can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be

**'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'**

John 10:10

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 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 students, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. (See also Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions, Page 23 for more detail, available [here](#)) 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. Students will also be directed towards using [safeguarding@sspp.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@sspp.lincs.sch.uk) if they have any questions that they do not wish to ask in person.

### **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 students 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 academy'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 students 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 students 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. Students will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help students facing personal difficulties, in line with the academy's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to students 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, Headteacher, but that the students would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Personal Development Lead 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 discussion with students, staff and parents. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for

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John 10:10

improvements. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.