

St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School
Policy for Relationships and Sex Education

Defining Relationships and Sex Education

The Relationships and Sex Education Policy at St Gregory's is in line with our Mission Statement we hold as paramount the importance and value of all persons in school and, by extension, in society. We firmly believe that positive relationships in a loving, caring environment enable our children to freely learn and develop to their full potential.

Education should nurture the whole human individual; aid personal growth and foster personal responsibility. Central to this process is the opportunity for adults and children alike to form relationships based on trust and integrity, love and concern. In our Catholic School these relationships are rooted in Christ's teaching; the programme from which we teach has our relationship with God at its very heart, with the teachings of Jesus Christ providing the blueprint for ways we should relate to each other as human beings (and as members of God's global family) and to the world around us.

The staff of St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School will work to give each child the entitlement of a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum (irrespective of ability) encouraging in every individual a sense of self-worth and self-esteem. All teaching and learning is underpinned by the school mission statement.

St. Gregory's is a Roman Catholic Primary School and as such we believe that the ethos of the school must in all its spiritual, moral and cultural aspects reflect the teachings of Christ in the Gospels, in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of the Catholic Church.

The DFE guidance defines RSE as "lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health"¹. 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. The DFE identifies three main elements: "attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding"². (The Welsh Assembly Government envisages that effective school RSE programmes help learners to develop the skills and knowledge appropriate to their age, understanding and development to enable them to make responsible decisions about their relationships, sexual health and well-being.)

It is a legal requirement to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

Rationale

"This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you" John 15:12

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.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy 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 reflecting God's beauty, and share in His 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 (and the Welsh Assembly Government) 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 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 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.

Development of self-esteem is at the heart of the process of achieving good behaviour and discipline. The approach used by staff in dealing with behaviour must be based upon an effective, clearly stated and consistently applied whole school policy, with clear rewards and sanctions.

RSE will be taught alongside our current RE Curriculum 'Come and See'. Many of the aspects of RSE are covered in the Explore section of 'Come and See' where the topic is being introduced, starting with the pupil's own experience, and extending into the Reveal and Respond sections. (*See Appendix 1*)

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 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.

Aim of Relationships and Sex Education

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.

At St. Gregory's 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. We aim 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.

The objectives of RSE are 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.

The objectives of RSE are 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.

The objectives of RSE are 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.

Inclusion and Differentiated Learning

At St. Gregory's 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.

Programme and Resources

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. Pupils 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 pupils.

A Journey in Love is the resource that is the recommended programme of study for Catholic schools for Sex and Relationship Education. It has been written as a progressive scheme of work that supports the Religious Education, PSHE and Science curriculum taught within a primary school. The scheme permeates through all levels of learning throughout the school. It focuses on friendship, family, community, relationships and spirituality; a guide to the children's development as young Catholics. (See Appendix 2)

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- experimental
- being active
- brainstorming
- group work
- role-play

- powerpoints
- dvd (A Journey in Love)
- pupil booklet (specific year groups)
- Parent letter (See Appendix 3)

Responsibility for Teaching the Programme

Parents are the first educators of their children. It is their right and responsibility to inform and educate their children in matters relating to human growth and development, particularly sexual development. Our school will always work in partnership with parents and carers and the programme offered by St. Aidan's will complement and not replace the primary role of the parent. Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from RSE except in those elements which are required by National Curriculum Science. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the head teacher. All parents will receive a copy of the parent booklet to explain the teachings of RSE in detail before children take part in the programme of study.

All teaching staff have a responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme. All members of 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.

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 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.

The Head teacher and SLT have 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.

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.

At St. Gregory's we 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.

Children will 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.

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 circumstance 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.

Governors

The 1996 Education Act places responsibility for the school's policy on RSE in the hands of the governors. Governors therefore must be aware of their responsibilities for the policy and provision of RSE in our school and comply with statutory requirements. Governors have a key role in ensuring RSE is of the highest quality and that it meets the needs of the children and young people at St. Gregory's.

The role of the Governor within RSE is to:

- 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 school policies, e.g., SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs;
- ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children;
- establish a link governor (Caroline Mosses) 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 PSHE.

Monitoring and Reviewing of Policy

The Head teacher monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. They also report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy and, if necessary, make recommendations for further improvements.

The Head teacher and governing body will review this policy every two years. They may, however, review the policy earlier than this if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved, to take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

Signed

Date

Review Date:

Appendix 1 – Examples of how the RE ‘Come and See’ Curriculum links with RSE

YEAR 2		
BEGINNINGS	God is present in every beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you feel when you begin anything new • Why some beginnings are easy and some are difficult • How each day is a new beginning
SIGNS & SYMBOLS	Signs and symbols used in Baptism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meaning and importance of some symbols in life. • The power of symbols to convey meaning • Some of the signs and symbols in daily life
PREPARING	Advent; preparing to celebrate Christmas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is it necessary to prepare? • What would happen if you didn't prepare? • How you feel when you are preparing for special times?
BOOKS	The books used in Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of books in our lives • The need for books • How books can help us
THANKSGIVING	Mass a special time for saying thank you to God for everything, especially Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you feel when you thank others? • How you feel when you are thanked?
OPPORTUNITIES	Lent an opportunity to start anew in order to celebrate Jesus' new life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How each day offers opportunities for good • What helps a person choose well • The opportunity Lent offers to make a new start.
SPREAD THE WORD	Pentecost a time to spread the Good News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of messages in daily life • The responsibility of passing on messages • The new life of Jesus
RULES	Reasons for rules in the Christian family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How rules are necessary in life • How it is sometimes hard to say sorry • How it is sometimes hard to forgive others
TREASURES	God's treasure; the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we treasure • What treasures we share • How we thank God for the treasures of our world

YEAR 6		
LOVING	God who never stops loving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What unconditional love means and how love is shown • How people show unconditional love to others • The beliefs and values which have inspired and influenced you to be loving • The scripture text that demonstrate God's unconditional love for everyone even when times are hard
VOCATION AND COMMITMENT	The vocation of priesthood and religious life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What it means to be committed • Why people are committed • The implications of lack of commitment
EXPECTATIONS	Jesus born to show God to the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expectations you have of yourself • Having high expectations of others • Trusting and believing in one another • What happens if you let people down or others let you down
SOURCES	The Bible, the special book for the Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The kind of books which are the most helpful • Our lives are enriched by books • The presence of God in the words of Scripture
UNITY	Eucharist enables people to live in communion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why friendships are important • The most important value in friendship • The kinds of behaviour that break a friendship • Those affected when a friendship is broken
DEATH & NEW LIFE	Celebrating Jesus' death and resurrection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The affect of loss in everyday life • What is the best way to cope with loss • How people cope with loss and death • How death brings new life
WITNESSES	The Holy Spirit enables people to become witnesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When and how to be a witness • Why it sometimes needs courage to be a witness • Examples of modern witnesses
HEALING	Sacrament of the Sick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing compassion and care for those who are ill • Helping, caring and understanding those with a learning disability. • Why people give time and commitment to caring for others • Why we care for the sick
COMMON GOOD	Work of Christians for the good of all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we build a fair and just world • The difference between fairness and justice, unfairness and injustice • Helping to promote the dignity and common good of one another • The ways we can act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with God • How Christians can work for the common good

N	NURSERY Wonder at God’s Love
R	RECEPTION YEAR God loves each of us in our uniqueness
1	YEAR ONE We meet God’s love in our family
2	YEAR TWO We meet God’s love in the community
3	YEAR THREE How we live in love
4	YEAR FOUR God loves us in our differences
5	YEAR FIVE God loves me in my changing and development
6	YEAR SIX The wonder of God’s love in creating new life

Appendix 3 – Parent’s RSE Letter

