



St Joseph's College

Positive Relationships & Sex Education Policy

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Horsman', is written over a faint, circular watermark or stamp.

*To inspire the minds of all generations through education, with fearless faith.
As a united community we demonstrate our Lasallian values of faith, service, and respect.*

Mission Statement

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Introduction – What is Relationship and Sex Education

‘Relationship and Sex Education’ (RSE) is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

This policy has been written taking into account the Diocesan Policy for Relationships and Sex Education of 2016. The Diocese reminds us that “The Second Vatican Council spoke of the need for “a positive and prudent sex education” to be imparted to children and adolescents as they grow older” so that their sexuality may be directed through a process of growth in self-knowledge and self-control to enable them to have a capacity for joy and fulfilment. As a Catholic school, our formation in this area is based on our faith in God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ and seeks to foster understanding of respectful and loving relationships including friendships, marriage, and family life.

As the term ‘Relationships and Sex Education’ (RSE) indicates, the emphasis is placed on the understanding and formation of respectful, loving relationships which exist between friends and within families. Understanding how relationships work and developing relationship skills gives a context for understanding human sexuality and human sexual health. This is consistent with the Church’s view that the purpose of RSE is to secure “an adequate knowledge of nature and importance of sexuality and of the harmonious and integral development of the persona towards psychological maturity, with full spiritual maturity in view, to which all believers are called” (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Education Guidance in Human Love November 1983).

1. Statutory Requirements

This policy is in accordance with the Diocesan Policy for Relationships and Sex Education 2016 which in turn refers to the DfE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (SRE) (2019), the Education Act 1996, the Learning and Skills Act 2000, and the Marriage Act 2013.

The statutory requirements relating to SRE are contained within different parts of United Kingdom legislation. They can be summarised as follows:

- All maintained primary and secondary schools must teach the SRE elements of the National Curriculum Science Order.
- All maintained secondary schools must provide SRE as part of the basic curriculum, including as a minimum education about HIV, AIDS and STIs and the national curriculum content about human growth and reproduction.
- All maintained primary and secondary schools must have an up to date policy for SRE, even if the policy (in the primary phase) is not to provide such a programme.
- Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex education provided, but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction as required by the National Curriculum Science Order.
- When providing SRE all schools must implement the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance published in 2019.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires that:

- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provision except the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under the National Curriculum Science Order.

- Young people learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children.
- Young people are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to age and cultural background.
- When providing RSE schools have regard to the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance of the DfE 2000.

The Archdiocese of Southwark states that age appropriate RSE should be part of the curriculum in all schools in this diocese. Students must be aware that the Marriage Act 2013 extends civil marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales.

Nothing in the act affects a Catholic schools' right to teach on marriage or on same sex relationships in accordance with the norms of the Catholic Church, as long as this is done in an appropriate and sensitive way.

2. Aims

RSE aims to secure "an adequate knowledge of the nature and importance of sexuality and of the harmonious and integral development of the person towards psychological maturity, with full spiritual maturity in view, to which all believers are called". (Educational Guidance in Human Love 1983) "It is about 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". (DfE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance 2000) "Sex education should provide information while keeping in mind that children and young people have not yet attainment full maturity. The information has to come at a proper time and in a way suited to their age". (Libreria Editrice Vatican Amoris Laetitia: The Joy of Love (19th March 2019))

To ensure that we provide children and young people with a "positive and prudent sexual education" effective RSE must ensure that:

1. Pupils have clear, accurate and sound knowledge
2. Church teachings are presented in a forthright and clear manner, using the specific references provided by the Church
3. In presentation of both knowledge and Church teachings, age appropriateness and the awareness of child development must be key. Instruction should match the child's developmental level and must be aware of individual differences.

Relationships and Sex education at St Joseph's College is delivered in line with the teaching of the Catholic Church and the Lasallian tradition, providing students with an understanding of the values of the Catholic faith. We aim:

1. To offer a programme which will inform and equip each student to make the best choices personally, morally and spiritually; with wisdom and compassion.
2. To see RSE as a responsibility shared by all staff, with the curriculum contributing to this formation of core values in our students.
3. To lead students to a fuller understanding that each human being is a Child of God, created in his own image, called to a special relationship of love with Him and, therefore, to be treated with the utmost respect and reverence.
4. To provide gradual RSE which will present the relevant biological facts in the context of Christian values based on moral principles; and to protect our students from ignorance. Students will be given all necessary information and answers to their questions.

RSE is a journey into the very essence of what it means to love as a person who is made in the image and likeness of God who is love. It involves the integration of sexuality within the life of a person so that they

may have life to the full. The school, together with the Catholic Church understands marriage to be a mutual commitment of total fidelity which is open to life.

3. Objectives

1. To help students to acquire understanding of reproduction, human growth, and the physical and emotional developments of puberty and adolescence.
2. To equip students for adult life by empowering them to develop positive values, and to make informed decisions about sex, relationships and their health.
3. To enable students to build relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility; which are free from harm or abuse.
4. To help students to acquire the knowledge and understanding of attitudes about themselves and others, which will assist them to live in society as responsible adults.
5. To encourage students to gain a sense of their own dignity and that of others, expressed in the respect and care with which they treat people.
6. To ensure that students feel supported in accepting their own sexuality and that of others, in a positive way.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Parents: The school and Church recognise that parents are the first teachers of their children. It is their right and responsibility to inform and educate their children in matters relating to human relationships and sexual development. St Joseph's College seeks to help parents in their task and work in partnership with them. Parents are welcome to discuss the content of any programme of RSE that will be delivered and resources that are planned to be used.

Members of staff responsible: The Raising Standards lead for student development has the overall responsibility and works in collaboration with the Assistant Headteacher in charge of Personal Development, the Headteacher and Link Governor, as well as the head of department for Science and the chaplaincy team. These members of staff will be responsible for the subject content, how it is taught and who is responsible for teaching it. They will also ensure that it is monitored and evaluated in collaboration with headteacher. RSE will be fully integrated into the curriculum and will be taught across a multitude of subjects, including RE, Science and PSHCE. This will furthermore be supported by sessions delivered by the Brook charity, an external speaker programme and weekly tutor time PSHE/Character sessions. Therefore, all teachers will be responsible for delivery. Those responsible for RSE will ensure that delivery of the content is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND.

RSE will prepare young people for an adult life in which they can:

- Value the beauty and purpose of their God given sexuality;
- Develop positive attitudes and a moral framework that will guide their judgements decisions and behaviour;
- Understand the arguments for reserving sexual activity until marriage;
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships;
- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others;
- Communicate effectively;
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others;

Sex education will be taught within the context of relationships and within the wider context of the whole curriculum with Catholic moral and spiritual foundations at the centre of all teaching.

All subjects have a role to play and all members of the school community, by virtue of the relationships they foster within the school, contribute to education in sexuality for which clear guidance is given. The school does not provide information, advice or services to facilitate artificial birth control or abortion.

Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE relating to 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 school's promotion of Catholic teaching.

We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

The lead teacher for RSE will oversee the planning of the curriculum, Continuing Professional Development, training and support for teachers. They will ensure that parents are informed about RSE in the school.

RSE will be developed in different curriculum areas, therefore different heads of department will be responsible for different subject areas and will make parents aware of the content being taught if they should have the right to withdraw.

Teachers and other adults: RSE is a whole school issue that all staff will be involved in to ensure that our students develop the personal and social skills that contribute to human flourishing. All staff will deliver content in the classroom but will also be role models around the school, giving examples of conflict resolution and establish relationships of mutual trust and respect. All staff have a responsibility of care and safeguarding of pupils. They will actively contribute to the guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of our students. This work will be in line with the school's Catholic ethos and current legislation.

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

5. Content & Delivery

RSE provides knowledge and information, encourages the acquisition of skills and the consideration of attitudes and values which will allow students to manage their lives in a responsible and healthy way.

Relationship and Sex Education topics in the Religious Education Curriculum

- Marriage and the vocation of marriage
- Marriage vows and sacraments
- Cohabitation
- Abortion, with particular reference to Christian teachings
- Chastity, Sexual relationships outside marriage, including adultery
- Human Sexuality and Sexual Relationships
- Heterosexuality and Homosexuality
- Contraception (taught briefly with regards to religious teachings)
- Marriage (including Christian marriage vows), annulment, divorce, same sex marriage
- Role of Men and Women
- Women in the Church

- Marriage
- Sexual relationships
- Contraception, Abortion and Euthanasia
- Cloning
- Raising awareness of FGM
- IVF

Relationship and Sex Education topics in the Science and through the PSHCE programme

- Life processes
- Cells
- Organ systems
- Reproduction
- Reproductive organs
- Becoming pregnant
- Gestation and birth
- Growing up
- Healthy relationships
- Sexting, laws and social media

A full outline for the PSHCE/RSE content and delivery process can be found on the school website.

6. Resources and External Speakers

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body, working with the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher for Personal Development and Head of RE and PSHCE to ensure that RSE is in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and to ensure that this is achieved through careful monitoring of resources. The following should be taken into account:

- Parents and carers need support by a provision which is faithful to the Church's teaching and age-appropriate.
- The extent to which resources illustrate the beauty of the human being created by God.
- The values which are implied by a resource and the way they enhance students' understanding of human development and Catholic teaching.
- Accuracy and clarity of what is being presented. External visitors should complement the school's provision of RSE and be mindful of the Church's teachings.

They should be clear about the nature of the school and their role and responsibility.

7. The Right to Withdraw

The Church stipulates that parents and guardians are the prime educators of their children. Parents and guardians will be informed in advance of the RSE curriculum and may view on request any materials used.

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from the relationships or health elements of the programme (see appendix 1 for areas that are statutory). Requests to withdraw a child from sex education will be made in writing to the Headteacher. Before granting a withdrawal request, the Head of Personal Development will discuss the request with the parents and, as appropriate, the child, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

The Head of Personal Development will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is our responsibility to ensure that the pupil receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. Parents do not have the right to withdraw from the Science curriculum. In addition, there is provision for a child to choose not to be withdrawn 3 terms before they turn 16.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

Appendix 1

The DfE specifies that by the end of secondary school students should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary school pupils, and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary school:

Families

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- What marriage is, including their legal status, e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.

Students will also know how to:

- Determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy.
- Judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe, and recognise this in others' relationships.
- How to seek help or advice if needed, including reporting concerns about others.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships in all contexts (including online), including trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (nonsexual) types of relationships.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- How stereotypes, particularly those based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage, e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour.
- That in school and wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to seek help.
- The types of behaviour in relationships that can be criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, with reference to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010, and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and media

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, and that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts.
- About online risks, including that material shared with another person has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which they receive.
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- The impact of viewing harmful content.
- That specifically sexually explicit material, e.g. pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties, including jail.
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Being safe

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour- based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn – this includes online.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively and negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for both men and women.
- The range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- That they have a choice to delay sex or enjoy intimacy without sex.
- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, their effectiveness and options available.
- The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- That there are choices in relation to pregnancy, with legally and medically accurate, impartial information on all options including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.
- How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex and the importance of facts about testing.
- About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

The Law

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.
- Substance misuse.
- Violence and exploitation by gangs.
- Extremism and radicalisation.
- Criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations).
- Hate crime.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM).

Health education subject overview

The physical health and mental wellbeing curriculum will continue to develop students' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section.

Mental wellbeing

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- That happiness is linked to being connected to others. How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- Common types of mental ill health, e.g. anxiety and depression.
- How to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- The benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.

Internet safety and harms

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online, over-reliance on online relationships, the risks related to online gambling, how information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.

- How to identify harmful behaviours online, including bullying, abuse or harassment, and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

Physical health and fitness

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health.
- About the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

Healthy eating

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use and serious mental health conditions.
- The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
- The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
- The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
- Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco, the benefits of quitting and how to access the support to do so.

Health and prevention

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- About personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- The benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.

Basic first aid

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- Basic treatments for common injuries. (Year 7 basic first aid)
- Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
- The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

Changing adolescent body

By the end of secondary school, students will know:

- Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.

- The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.