



St. Francis Xavier's RC Primary School

Love one another as I have loved you

John 15:12

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

1. Introduction

Catholic education is always 'holistic'; it is education of the 'whole person', who is on a journey or pilgrimage of life. Its goal of promoting the flourishing of each human person corresponds to the inner yearnings of the human spirit and the human heart. Inspired by the Revelation of God, the aims and pedagogy of such truly Catholic and universal education have at the same time also been proved by lived experience to promote that harmony between body, mind and spirit so keenly sought after in a world often confused about such things.

Human relationships and human sexuality are not 'incidental' to such human flourishing, but instead are part of the core of what it means to be human. Because these aspects of human life are so important for understanding human flourishing, it is a key part of the Church's educational responsibility to provide for the best possible education and formation in this field.

Catholic teaching is an understanding of the value, beauty and glory of human nature and human relationships that applies to all humankind. We are created to live in relationships of harmony, trust and love with God, with one-another, within ourselves (as a holistic harmony of body, mind and spirit) and with all creation. Hence guiding the learning of young people about their relationship with God, with themselves and with others is a process of developing their understanding of how to live a good life, a life that alone brings true and complete human flourishing and, in consequence true and abiding happiness. The centre of the human person is that desire to be loved and to love, to live and to be creative.

2. Vision and Mission

The school's vision

At St. Francis Xavier's RC Primary School, we are aware that sexuality is a fundamental component of one's personality and so is God's gift to us. It is therefore essential that '... our children and young people are given positive guidance and a true appreciation of all their human gifts' (Bishops' Conference 1987).

We recognise that parents are the key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings. Legislation requires of schools' careful consideration of the whole education of young people. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is an integral part of the growth and development of pupils and cannot be neglected if our school is to fulfil its statutory obligation.

At St. Francis Xavier's, we wish our pupils to participate in a curriculum which will help them to develop spiritually, intellectually, morally, socially and culturally, so that they will be fully prepared for adult life.

Our Mission

Love one another as I have loved you

John 15:12

Share God's love with one another

Follow your dreams

EXcel in citizenship

Mission Statement

It is our mission to maintain St. Francis Xavier's R.C Primary School as a loving community, upholding and promoting the values, teaching and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church and to make the best possible provision to support the spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual development of the children.

Our Mission is to:

- Be a witness to the values, teaching and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church
- Promote achievement and enjoyment for all
- Expect the best for individuals
- Inspire learning
- Collaborate with the community
- Promote a healthy and safe life style
- Create a sustainable school
- Continually strive to be effective

3. Procedures

The following groups have been consulted as part of producing this policy.

- staff- during INSET training
- governing body -presentation at Full Governing Body
- parents – meeting to show and discuss the proposed resources
- Diocesan Education Service- Policy to be approved

In consultation with the Governing Body, the policy will be implemented in September 2019 and reviewed annually by the headteacher, RSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and school staff. The next review date is September 2023.

The policy will be circulated to all members of the Governing Body and all members of staff. The policy will be available on the school's website. The Diocesan Director of Education/ Director of RE will be sent a copy of the school's RSE policy and it is the duty of the Governing Body to ensure that this is up to date.

4. Rationale

As a Catholic primary school in the Province of Cardiff, Menevia, Wrexham and Herefordshire, we use the term Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as we believe that sex education is set in a wider context of relationship education that is about all aspects of growing a fulfilled and happy life. Sex education is but one dimension of this greater whole.

The defining belief of Christianity is that God took on human form. This endows the human person with an extraordinary dignity that goes beyond that of all other forms of life and shows that humanity alone can embrace this relationship with God. Therefore, our relationship with our own bodies is not casual – our bodies are the dwelling place, the ‘temple’ of the Holy Spirit. Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in school must be rooted in this belief which is expressed in the Church’s teaching about relationships, marriage, sex and family life.

The Church educates young people as part of complete human formation. Education about human love is no less a part of a Catholic school’s responsibility than teaching about Mathematics or English. At St. Francis Xavier’s we teach young people about how to grow in relationships, including understanding loving relationships and acknowledging that children’s first experience of love is in the home. We encourage children from the earliest age to recognise that they are all children of God and that each person shares a God-given dignity. As children mature, we encourage them to follow the example of Jesus and live lives inspired by the Gospel virtues, enabling them to follow His commandment to “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”(John 15:12). This is the basis for all relationships in our school. Teaching about relationships in our schools is supported by Christian virtue teaching as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Legal guidelines suggest that relationship and sex education should build on the children’s own experiences, be sensitive to the specific domestic contexts the children come from, form attitudes and values towards relationships, develop personal and social skills and increase the knowledge and understanding of each young person as they grow about their relationships and well-being, including sexual health. We support all these aims in educating about relationships and sex education by incorporating them into the wider understanding of human relationships and human formation as reflected in the relevant CBEW and CES RSE Guidance.

5. Statutory framework

Relationships , sex and health education(RSHE) statutory guidance for England:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

6. Virtues and Values

Gospel virtues and values underpin the RSE curriculum. The Christian tradition describes behaviour or habits that lead to happiness, human flourishing and a closer relationship with God as virtues. These virtues are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and fall into two groups. The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (sometimes simply ‘love’ is used instead of ‘charity’) are about developing the habits of being open to the work of the Holy Spirit and developing a deeper relationship with God through living a balanced and good life. The cardinal virtues of practical wisdom (prudence), justice, fortitude and temperance help people develop habits of reason, fairness, emotional resilience and self-mastery. They are human virtues and, as such, are part of the development of people of all faiths or none

as they learn how to flourish, thrive and to have a life supported by strong and caring relationships. The cardinal virtues are drawn from the teachings of Plato and Aristotle and are held in common with people of many faiths and secular beliefs. St. Thomas Aquinas attributes the theological virtues as having their foundation in God, they complete the cardinal virtues and are the way people can reach "the abundant life" (John 10:10).

At St. Francis Xavier's the children follow the SFX Pupil Profile. Each half-term they follow a pair of virtues through assemblies, displays, collective worship. Virtues are embedded in the curriculum and ethos of the school.

Pupils in St. Francis Xavier's school are growing to be . . .

- ❖ Grateful for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for the blessings of each day; and generous with their gifts, becoming men and women for others.
- ❖ Attentive to their experience and to their vocation; and discerning about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.
- ❖ Compassionate towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and loving by their just actions and forgiving words.
- ❖ Faith-filled in their beliefs and hopeful for the future.
- ❖ Eloquent and truthful in what they say of themselves, the relations between people, and the world.
- ❖ Learned, finding God in all things; and wise in the ways they use their learning for the common good.
- ❖ Curious about everything; and active in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.
- ❖ Intentional in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and prophetic in the example they set to others.

7. The Aim and Objectives of RSE

The aim of RSE is part of our aim to educate the complete human person. This is expressed in *Fit for Mission? Schools* (2009) as follows:

The fundamental needs of the human person are the focus of Catholic education – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual, and eschatological (our eternal destiny). These fundamental needs can only be truly fulfilled through a rich and living encounter with the deepest truths about God and the human person.

This is why Christ and His Gospel must be the foundation of the educational project of each school and college, because He is 'the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection' (Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*). Therefore, the Catholic school or college is called to keep the Gospel whole and alive amongst pupils, families, and staff.

RSE should therefore deepen the following areas of understanding:

- ❖ To develop self-knowledge, and respect and love of self;
- ❖ To invite young people to develop and deepen a loving relationship with God;
- ❖ To invite young people to understand that their life has a purpose;
- ❖ To invite young people to develop and deepen relationships with each other based on mutual respect and care and to understand this is an expression of God's love;

- ❖ To foster an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church about how to live a full life, a life of virtue, and the place of human sexuality in living a full life, marriage and parenthood that is appropriate to the stage of maturity of the young people;
- ❖ A strong awareness of their own safety and the nature of appropriate consent;
- ❖ To have an understanding of the law in England and Wales about Equality and Marriage, appropriate to age and maturity.

RSE develops attitudes, personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding through the following:

- We will seek to develop attitudes of awe and wonder for the gift and beauty of self, respect for each other as children of God and rejoice in the goodness of God's creation, through looking after the school environment, ECO club, prayer life.

- We will seek to develop attitudes of responsibility towards ourselves and others, recognising the dignity in all for example- Y6 hold jobs of responsibility such as Head/ Deputy boys and girls, library and office monitors. The school council and ECO club raise awareness of how look after our world and school. Children will raise money for charities locally, nationally and globally.

- We will seek to enable children to understand the choices they make and how they can help or harm themselves, through assemblies, collective worship, Penitential Services, Sacrament of Reconciliation, school behaviour systems.)

- ❖ We will encourage children to learn about expressing their own emotions and being respectful of the emotions and behaviours of others, through P4C, Behaviour systems and Listening partners.
- ❖ We will encourage the whole school to be like a loving family recognising God as a merciful and generous father as Jesus taught in the Lord's prayer, through Mass, assemblies, collective worship, social events.
- ❖ We will encourage everyone in the school to recognise their part in the school family and work together for reconciliation when relationships in the school falter through Penitential Services, School Mission and Virtues.
- ❖ We will encourage everyone in the school to value humility, mercy and compassion and to respond with empathy to the problems of others, through School Catholic profile, circle time, P4C, British Values.
- ❖ We will develop children's knowledge of when to say 'no' to behaviours or attitudes that harm their dignity or the dignity of others and to be responsible for their own safety. This will be taught through Computing, P4C, RE and British Values and Virtues.
- ❖ We will develop children's experience of what it is to be happy so that they begin to understand the difference between happiness and gratification and value patience.
- ❖ We will teach children about the media and their choices, about what to watch, what games to play, what rules apply and that the dignity of all does not just apply to people who are physically seen, it applies to online relationships too.
- ❖ We will support children when relationships in their lives are challenging and teach them that there are people in school who will listen if they are experiencing changes that make them frightened or uncomfortable.
- ❖ We will foster an atmosphere in school which celebrates the work of the Holy Trinity through the life of the school and its relationship with the Church.

- ❖ We will teach children about the beauty of the Church's teaching about love and God's love for them which is shared in the Sacraments.
- ❖ We will sensitively share the Church's teaching about the importance of marriage and family life as a way to live in loving relationships with others and with God.

8. Inclusion

At St. Francis Xavier's we identify that young people mature in different ways. Our teaching about relationships and sexuality is respectful of each child's starting point, their faith, culture and background. Lessons are framed by this understanding and young people encouraged to respect each other in their differences, and develop an approach of dialogue.

At St. Francis Xavier's through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- ❖ have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- ❖ require different strategies for learning
- ❖ acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- ❖ need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences

9. Equality

The governing body has wide obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and will work to ensure that St. Francis Xavier's endeavours to do its best for all of the pupils, irrespective of ability (physical and mental), race, ethnicity, nationality, maternity, pregnancy, sex, gender identity or orientation or whether they are looked after children. (Equality Policy)

See CES Website and refer to 'Public Sector Equality Duty in England.' Please follow this link: [public sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#)

10. Programme of study

The Province recommends appropriate resources to its family of schools in Section 2.1 above. These range from ages 3-19 years and provide suggested areas of study and outcomes for the young people it serves. It is envisaged that this programme will be taught in discrete lessons, in cross curricular lessons, particularly R.E. and science and fundamentally embedded in the ethos of the school through assemblies, classroom discussions and the centering of all relationships in school on the person of Jesus Christ. The programme of study is based on the understanding of the Church of human nature and human sexuality, and aims to help young people develop their sense of purpose and character. It should be taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and will thus have room for the expression of alternative viewpoints by pupils.

Resource	Year Groups
RE Scheme- 'In God's Name'	Year groups – Reception to Year 6
A Fertile Heart	Year groups - Reception to Year 6
Pupil Profile (JPP)	Year groups – Reception to Year 6
Ten Ten Resource	Year 1 to Year 6 Plus Reception when material is written
Themed weeks during the year- Healthy Week, Tolerance and Respect Week, E- Safety Week	
Curriculum subjects- RE, Science, Physical Education, Computing will also contribute to the coverage of the RSE Curriculum	

See RSE Long Term Plan for coverage of the RSE Curriculum.

11. Parents

The Church recognises parents as the first educators of their children. Our schools assist parents in this task also in RSE, aiding and completing (where needed) the work of parents and furnishing children and adolescents with an evaluation of "sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God". (Educational Guidance in Human Love (1983) Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education N69). Children's first experience of relationships and love is in the home. At our schools we seek to work with parents and support them as their children grow and begin to develop their own character as well as experiencing changes in their physical appearance. Parents have been consulted about this policy before it was ratified by the governing body.

St. John Paul II taught without equivocation that the right of parents to educate is: "primary in regard to the educational role of others, on account of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents and children fundamental because it is rooted upon parental transmission of life to and love for their child ...irreplaceable and inalienable, and therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others." [Familiaris Consortio N.36]. This principle underpins our approach to RSE.

Parents will be given the opportunity to view resources that contain sensitive subject matter before these are shown to the pupils.

"Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their children from RSE lessons, or request their withdrawal, where such a right exists. Where such a right does no longer exist, particular care has been taken to ensure that dialogue and involvement of parents is a priority concern of the school."

12. Teaching RSE

Teaching and learning about human relationships will be part of the life of the school. However, the programme of study will be taught through cross curricular dimensions where appropriate, such as R.E., Science, Physical Education and Computing. Sometimes, the children's learning will be best supported by using other agencies, such as the school nurse, or other visitors to school. Such visitors will be guided to read the protocol for visitors at St. Francis Xavier's and will agree in writing to follow the instructions. The appropriate 'protocol' available on the CES website will be used for this purpose.

13. Supporting children and young people deemed to be at risk

Like all other subjects, RSE always needs to be taught in a differentiated manner appropriate to the maturity of the children. It needs to be framed so that the young people who are participating know that there is pastoral support if any of the issues discussed make them feel the need to talk further or share confidential information. This should always be done within the safeguarding framework of the school and it is paramount that all staff teaching RSE have up to date safeguarding professional development.

Questions asked by students that are a cause for concern for the teacher, for example because of their explicit or graphic content, should be addressed in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy and confidentiality procedures.

The following guidance for dealing with questions in teaching RSE will be followed: Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Many teachers are concerned about responding to unexpected questions or comments from pupils in a whole-class situation. Having a set of ground rules should reduce the chances of this happening but teachers will need support and training so that they are prepared for the unexpected.

For example:

- ❖ If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as a school counsellor, school nurse, helpline, or an outside agency or service;
- ❖ If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the pupil or teacher or both together research the question later;
- ❖ If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the pupil will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the pupil later;
- ❖ If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's child protection procedures. (DfE Sex and Relationships Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions')

Please refer to St Francis Xavier's RC School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy September 2023.

This policy was updated April 2024. The policy was ratified by the Standards and Curriculum Committee on 20th May 2024. The policy will be proposed to the Full Governing Body on 1st July 2024.

The policy will be monitored by The Archdiocese of Cardiff, members of the Senior Management Team, Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Committee and the Full Governing Body.

Signed: *Paul Williams* Date: 1.7.24 Chair of Full Governing Body

Signed: *Sylvia Cockroft* Date: 20.5.24 Chair of Standards and Curriculum Committee

Signed: *Diana Pearce* Date: 20.5.24 Headteacher

Elizabeth Christopherson RSE Subject Leader
May 2024