

St Nicholas Catholic Primary School

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy (RSHE)

"Love one another, as I have loved you."

Policy owner	RSE / PSHE Lead / RE Lead
Approved by	Governing Body
Date approved	September 2026
Review date	September 2027
Core programme	Life to the Full – Ten Ten Resources

Mission

St Nicholas Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Primary serving the parish of Blessed Edmund Sykes. Our aim is to develop the full potential of each individual as a child of God, responding to present needs and assisting in growth towards responsible adulthood.

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child and we believe that Relationships, Sex and Health Education is an integral part of this education.

In this context, we commit ourselves, in partnership with parents and carers, to providing children with a positive and prudent relationships and sexuality education which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological and spiritual maturity and rooted in the Catholic vision of education and of the human person.

Our approach to RSHE is underpinned by our school motto: "Love one another, as I have loved you." Through our curriculum and wider school life, we aim to foster loving, caring relationships in accordance with the teachings and example of Jesus Christ.

Purpose of this policy

This policy sets out the school's approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education and explains:

- the Catholic rationale and values underpinning our provision;
- the statutory requirements placed upon the school;
- the content and organisation of our curriculum;
- how learning is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils;
- how parents and carers are involved;
- arrangements for withdrawal from non-statutory sex education;
- roles and responsibilities;
- safeguarding arrangements; and
- how provision is monitored and evaluated.

Consultation, implementation and review

This policy has been developed and reviewed with regard to the views of staff, governors, pupils and parents and carers.

Consultation may include:

- discussion with staff and governors;
- feedback from pupils;
- parent and carer consultation;
- review of current curriculum content and resources;
- consideration of diocesan and Catholic Education Service guidance; and
- evaluation of the needs of pupils within our school community.

The Governing Body retains responsibility for approving the policy and ensuring that provision remains consistent with the Catholic character and mission of the school.

The policy will be reviewed regularly and sooner where changes to statutory, diocesan or national guidance require this.

Dissemination

The policy will be made available to all members of staff and governors.

It will be published on the school website and will be available to parents and carers free of charge. Parents and carers will also be provided with information about the RSHE curriculum and the resources used within school.

Catholic rationale for RSHE

The aim of Catholic Relationships, Sex and Health Education is rooted in the belief that Catholic Christianity is a living tradition of lifelong learning in the knowledge and love of God.

"God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God and God lives in him." (1 John 4:16)

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

"God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27)

We teach RSHE because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This communion of love reveals that the desire for fulfilling and flourishing human relationships is God-given.

The belief that God became human in Christ gives particular dignity to the human body and to the whole person.

The belief in the unique dignity of every person, made in the image and likeness of God, underpins our approach to RSHE. Every member of the school community is worthy of dignity, love and respect.

Our provision therefore seeks to help pupils understand themselves, their relationships with others and their responsibilities towards the world around them within the context of Catholic teaching.

Definition of Relationships, Sex and Health Education

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is concerned with the spiritual, moral, social, emotional and physical development of pupils.

It helps children develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills needed to:

- form positive, healthy and respectful relationships;
- recognise the dignity of themselves and others;
- understand their physical and emotional development;
- keep themselves and others safe;
- make informed and responsible choices;
- recognise unsafe or unhealthy situations and seek help;
- understand family life and relationships; and
- grow in confidence, responsibility and virtue.

Teaching about relationships, the body, sexuality and human development is placed within the context of Catholic teaching about the dignity of the human person, love, commitment, family life and marriage.

Statutory requirements

Relationships Education is compulsory for all primary-aged pupils.

Health Education is compulsory in state-funded primary schools.

Primary schools are not required to teach sex education beyond the content contained within the National Curriculum for Science, although schools may choose to do so in an age-appropriate way.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from:

- Relationships Education;
- Health Education; or
- statutory National Curriculum Science.

Where the school provides sex education that goes beyond statutory Science, parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from that specific teaching. In a primary school, the Headteacher must grant such a request.

The school has regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, alongside relevant legislation and guidance.

Values and virtues

Our programme promotes Catholic values relating to the importance of relationships, marriage, family life and the dignity of every person.

The following virtues are explicitly encouraged and developed:

- love
- mercy
- compassion
- faithfulness
- temperance
- fortitude
- prudence
- respect
- responsibility
- forgiveness
- honesty
- justice

Our approach acknowledges that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their family life and personal circumstances treated with respect.

Pupils are encouraged to treat others with dignity and compassion, including those whose experiences, backgrounds, family structures, cultures, faiths or beliefs differ from their own.

Aims and objectives

Our RSHE programme aims to develop the whole person and to support pupils in developing attitudes and virtues, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding.

Attitudes and virtues

- reverence for the gift of human life and the human body;
- respect for the dignity of every person;
- responsibility for one's own actions and their impact on others;
- an appreciation of healthy and loving relationships;
- an understanding of the importance of family life;
- respect for difference;

- compassion and empathy; and
- an understanding of the importance of commitment and faithfulness in relationships.

Personal and social skills

- form healthy friendships and relationships;
- manage emotions appropriately;
- resolve conflict positively;
- communicate effectively;
- show empathy and respect;
- recognise pressure and respond appropriately;
- understand and respect appropriate personal boundaries;
- recognise unsafe situations;
- make sound judgements and responsible choices;
- build resilience; and
- know when and how to ask for help.

Knowledge and understanding

Pupils will be supported to understand, at an age-appropriate level:

- different types of relationships;
- healthy friendships;
- families and caring relationships;
- physical and emotional development;
- puberty;
- how to keep themselves physically and emotionally healthy;
- appropriate and inappropriate behaviour;
- privacy, consent and personal boundaries;
- online relationships and online safety;
- how and where to seek help;
- the facts of human reproduction where appropriate within Science and the school's programme; and
- the Catholic understanding of the dignity and purpose of human relationships.

Curriculum provision

At St Nicholas Catholic Primary School, we use Life to the Full by Ten Ten Resources as our core programme for Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

Life to the Full is a Catholic programme which supports pupils in learning about relationships, health, human dignity and personal development within a Catholic understanding of the human person.

The programme is used alongside relevant teaching in:

- Religious Education;
- Science;
- PSHE;
- Computing and online safety;
- Physical Education;
- safeguarding education; and
- the wider life and mission of the school.

The use of a scheme does not replace professional judgement. Teachers ensure that teaching is appropriate to the age, developmental stage and needs of pupils within their class.

Mixed-age classes and curriculum progression

As a school with mixed-age classes, we carefully adapt and map the Life to the Full programme so that pupils receive their full statutory entitlement and experience clear progression over time.

Content is organised to:

- ensure all statutory content is taught;
- avoid unnecessary repetition;
- build progressively on prior knowledge;
- take account of pupils' age and developmental stage; and
- ensure that age-specific or sensitive content is taught at the most appropriate time.

Where content is particularly age-specific or developmentally sensitive, pupils may be taught separately from the wider mixed-age group where this is most appropriate.

Teachers adapt examples, pacing, resources and scaffolding while maintaining the intended learning and Catholic principles of the programme.

Inclusion and adaptive teaching

We will ensure that RSHE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils, including differences in:

- ability;
- maturity;
- communication and interaction;
- cognition and learning;
- sensory or physical needs;
- social, emotional and mental health needs;
- family circumstances;
- faith and culture; and
- prior knowledge and experience.

Pupils with SEND will receive appropriate support and reasonable adjustments so that they can access their full entitlement.

Adaptations may include:

- visual support;
- simplified or clarified language;
- pre-teaching of vocabulary;
- additional processing time;
- repetition and overlearning;
- smaller-group teaching where appropriate;
- alternative methods of communication;
- additional adult support; and
- careful consideration of sensory and emotional needs.

Adaptation will support access to learning rather than unnecessarily reducing the intended curriculum.

Particular care will be taken where a pupil's SEND or circumstances may increase vulnerability to exploitation, abuse or misunderstanding of relationships and personal boundaries.

Equality and respect

The Governing Body recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

The school will ensure that pupils are not unlawfully discriminated against because of a protected characteristic, including:

- disability;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity.

Teaching will also reflect the school's commitment to the dignity of every human person and to creating a school community in which pupils feel safe, respected and valued.

Pupils will learn that families and relationships may look different and that all people should be treated with dignity and respect.

Teaching approaches

Teaching strategies may include:

- establishing clear ground rules;
- discussion;
- use of scenarios and fictional characters;
- role play;
- stories and age-appropriate resources;
- paired and group work;
- reflection;
- pupil questions;
- retrieval of prior learning; and
- carefully selected materials from Life to the Full and other appropriate school resources.

Teachers will not require pupils to disclose personal experiences or discuss private family matters.

Distancing techniques will be used where appropriate so that pupils can explore sensitive issues safely without being expected to speak about their own lives.

Pupils' questions

RSHE lessons should provide a safe environment in which pupils feel able to ask questions.

Questions will be answered honestly, sensitively and in a way that is appropriate to the pupil's age, maturity and developmental stage.

Staff may choose not to answer a question immediately where:

- it would not be appropriate for the age or development of the class;
- the question is personal or intrusive;
- the answer could compromise another person's privacy; or
- the question raises a safeguarding concern.

Where appropriate, a teacher may speak to a pupil individually, consult a senior leader or advise that the question is better addressed with the pupil's parent or carer.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

There will be sensitive issues discussed within RSHE. Children need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which teaching takes place.

Effective RSHE provides opportunities for pupils to learn about what is and is not appropriate in relationships and how to seek help. Such discussion may lead to a pupil making a disclosure or raising a safeguarding concern.

Staff must never promise confidentiality to a pupil.

Where a member of staff has a safeguarding concern, they must follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures immediately and report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The school's safeguarding procedures take precedence over confidentiality within an RSHE lesson.

Working with parents and carers

Parents and carers are the primary educators of their children. The school seeks to support, rather than replace, parents and carers in this role.

We recognise that parents and carers may sometimes find sensitive aspects of RSHE difficult to discuss with their children. We therefore aim to provide clear information and appropriate support.

Parents and carers will be:

- informed about the school's RSHE programme;
- given opportunities to understand curriculum content;
- able to access relevant information about resources used;
- informed where particularly sensitive content will be taught where appropriate; and
- consulted as part of policy and curriculum review.

The school may provide workshops, curriculum information or other support to help families continue appropriate conversations at home.

Right to withdraw from sex education

Parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from statutory Relationships Education, Health Education or National Curriculum Science.

Where the school teaches sex education beyond the statutory National Curriculum for Science, parents may request that their child is withdrawn from that teaching.

Any parent wishing to make such a request should contact the Headteacher.

Before withdrawal takes place, the school will normally offer parents the opportunity to discuss:

- the content of the lesson;
- the purpose of the teaching;
- how the content fits within the wider curriculum; and
- any questions or concerns the parent may have.

In a primary school, a parental request to withdraw from non-statutory sex education must be granted.

Where a pupil is withdrawn, the school will provide appropriate and purposeful alternative education during that time.

External agencies and visitors

Support and guidance from external agencies and professionals will complement, rather than replace, the school's RSHE curriculum.

The school remains responsible for the content and quality of any session delivered by an external visitor.

Visitors will be made aware of:

- the school's Catholic character and mission;
- this RSHE policy;
- safeguarding expectations;
- the age and needs of the pupils; and
- the intended learning.

Resources and materials used by external visitors will be checked in advance where appropriate.

Roles and responsibilities

Governors

Governors are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the Catholic character of the school.

They will:

- approve and review this policy;
- ensure provision is consistent with Catholic teaching;
- ensure statutory requirements are met;
- ensure parents understand the curriculum and their rights;
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of provision; and
- provide appropriate challenge and support to school leaders.

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that provision meets statutory and diocesan expectations.

The Headteacher is also responsible for responding to parental requests for withdrawal from non-statutory sex education.

RSHE / PSHE leader

The leader responsible for RSHE will:

- oversee curriculum planning and progression;
- support teachers in delivering the programme;
- ensure Life to the Full is appropriately adapted for the school's mixed-age structure;
- support staff with subject knowledge and sensitive issues;
- monitor provision;
- review resources;
- support staff development; and
- report to senior leaders and governors as appropriate.

Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for delivering age-appropriate RSHE content to their pupils.

Teachers will:

- follow the agreed curriculum;
- maintain the Catholic ethos of the programme;
- adapt provision appropriately;
- establish safe classroom expectations;
- answer questions appropriately;
- follow safeguarding procedures; and
- assess pupils' learning.

All staff

RSHE is a whole-school responsibility. Every member of staff has a duty of care and a responsibility to uphold the dignity of every person.

Staff should model positive, respectful relationships in their interactions with pupils, colleagues, families and members of the wider community.

Assessment

Assessment in RSHE is used to understand what pupils know and understand and to inform future teaching.

Assessment may include:

- pupil discussion;
- questioning;
- written or creative tasks;
- retrieval activities;
- observation;
- pupil voice; and
- review of pupils' work.

Assessment will not involve judging pupils' personal beliefs, family circumstances or private experiences. The focus is on pupils' knowledge, understanding and ability to apply learning appropriately.

Monitoring and evaluation

The quality of RSHE provision will be monitored through a range of activities which may include:

- curriculum and planning review;
- scrutiny of pupils' work;
- pupil voice;
- discussions with staff;
- lesson visits;
- review of assessment;
- parental feedback;
- governor monitoring; and
- evaluation of staff confidence and training needs.

Monitoring will consider:

- whether statutory content is fully covered;
- whether the curriculum reflects Catholic teaching;
- whether progression is secure across mixed-age classes;
- whether provision meets the needs of pupils with SEND;
- whether pupils remember and understand key learning; and
- whether staff feel confident in teaching sensitive content.

Relationship to other policies and curriculum areas

This policy should be read alongside relevant school policies and guidance, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality and Inclusion policies;

- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- PSHE curriculum documentation;
- Science curriculum;
- Computing curriculum;
- Religious Education curriculum; and
- relevant diocesan guidance.

Learning across these areas should complement and reinforce the school's RSHE provision.

Key references

- Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (current version).
- Catholic Education Service: Good Practice in Developing a School RSE Policy – Revised 2025.
- Catholic Schools Inspectorate: Inspection Handbook, September 2024 v3.1.
- Equality Act 2010.
- National Curriculum in England: Science programmes of study.