



St. Michael's Catholic Primary School

Relationship, Sex and Education Policy November 2023

Approved by Governors:
Review date:

November 2023
November 2025

Mission Statement:

'In the footsteps of Jesus, we strive to achieve excellence in everything we do.'

Consultations

In devising and reviewing this policy we have consulted with the following.

- Online questionnaires to parents/ carers
- Pupil focus groups/ school council.
- Review of RSHE content with staff and pupils
- Following guidance from Brentwood Diocese.
- School governors

Rationale

'I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL' (Jn.10.10)

At St Michael's we are involved in relationships, sex and health 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 RSHE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals. By using Jesus as our model, St Michael's shows pupils what it means to live in a healthy and happy relationship with others.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity; Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God, gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity. RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of 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 (Personal, Social and Health Education) 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 centered 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. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Sex Education is developed through cross-curricular links within Science, RE, PSHE & Computing but essentially Education in Sex and Personal Relationships is concerned with the development of positive relationships with ourselves, other people, and the world around us and with God. Sex education will be taught in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family.

Values and Virtues

Our programme enshrines Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to the God's call to love others with a proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body. The following virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

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

Education

The DfE guidance states that "children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way". It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of him or her as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. In primary schools the focus should be on "teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults." This would include the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

Statutory Curriculum Requirements

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

Aims:

At St Michael's our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavor 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, to provide children and young people with a "positive and prudent sexual education" which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

Objectives:

By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of pupils should be able to:

- To recognise and verbalise the way that they are feeling
- To talk about their own family and home life
- To be able to manage their own personal hygiene needs
- To be able to identify whether they are male or female
- To be able to name the major parts of the body

By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils should be able:

- To understand the importance of valuing themselves and others.
- To recognise their membership of the family and recognise the roles of individuals in families.
- To understand growth.
- To recognise that babies have special needs.
- To appreciate relationships, friends, family, caring, working together, sharing and playing together.
- To know about rituals that mark life, and especially, birth, marriage and death.
- To recognise the range of emotions and how we deal with them.
- To know about being safe.
- To have an awareness of personal health and safety and personal hygiene.

By the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils should be able:

- To appreciate that life is precious and a gift from God and to use this gift in God's service.
- To value themselves as a child of God, and their body as God's gift to them.
- To understand that they grow and change throughout life.
- To understand what is meant by relationships within families, friends and communities.

- To develop an appreciation of what is involved in bringing up children and what responsibility parents have.
- To become aware of the different patterns of friendship.
- To know the rituals celebrated in Church, marking birth, marriage and death.
- To be aware of their changing emotions and the need to respect the emotions and feelings of other people, valuing their own identity.
- To begin to know about and understand the changes that come about through puberty.
- To know and understand their own bodies and their need for personal hygiene.
- To know the names for the parts of the body.
- To know the basic biology of human reproduction.
- To become aware of the choices they make and that there are good choices and wrong choices.
- To recognise the importance of forgiveness in relationships

Inclusion and differentiation

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, 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.

Equalities Obligation

The governing body has wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, religion or whether they are looked-after children.

Broad content of RSE

Three aspects of RSE - attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills will be provided in three inter-related ways: the whole school / ethos dimension; a cross-curricular dimension and a specific relationships and sex curriculum.

At St Michael's our programme will follow the RSE Curriculum as recommended by the Catholic Education Service and whilst, for example, some aspects of RSE will be more appropriately explored in science lessons and some more appropriately explored in RE lessons, each will be informed by the other. Resources used will include *A Journey in Love; The Come and See and Ten Ten programme*; alongside the relevant National Curriculum science and health topics. Each discipline will speak with consistency about the meaning of human love and the virtues that are enshrined in the Church's teaching on human love. A well-planned programme will not just ensure that there is correspondence between phases and across disciplines but will ensure that parents are fully involved in the planning and evaluation of the teaching of relationships, sexuality and health. Pupils' learning and development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. These will include feedback from the staff, parents and pupils.

Parents and Carers

At St Michael's we recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school; we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. We are committed to working with parents and carers and will offer support by providing material to be shared with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more. Parents/carers will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Since September 2020, Relationship and Sex Education will be statutory; however parents continue to have the right to withdraw their children from the Sex Education aspect, except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to

notify the school by contacting the Head Teacher. The school will offer support by providing material for parents to help children with their learning.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. However, parents must be aware that Sex Education takes place at home, in the school playground, on TV and in the media, so withdrawing a child from these lessons may result in the child becoming confused

Organisation

The PSHE Subject Leader has the responsibility, along with the Head Teacher, to ensure that the planned Relationship Sex and Health Education programme is delivered effectively. .However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme and will be responsible for delivering their section of the programme to their class. RSE is a whole school issue and 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 RSHE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. If specific training is required, at any point, it will be provided through the school's INSET programme. In delivering the curriculum, classes will remain mixed (boys and girls) for all elements of the Sex Education Programme, except in Years 5 and 6, where if appropriate, separate gender provision should be available.

External Visitors

At St Michael's we will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists such as the NSPCC to deliver aspects of RSE such as puberty and hygiene. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'. Health professionals should follow the school's policies, minimizing the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practices.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors and staff 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.

Confidentiality

The staff and governors at St Michael's want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. They want to ensure that pupils can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people. All lessons, taught 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 will explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive .Teachers will explain that in such circumstances 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.

Supporting children who are at risk

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well

lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will 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.

Role of Governors

Governors have a legal responsibility to ensure that the RSE policy is in accordance with other whole school policies and promotes the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs. Through the establishment of a link governor, there will be consultation with staff and advisors to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including all resources used.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE subject Leader will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils work at regular intervals. The effectiveness to the school's approach to Relationship, Sex and Health Education will also be evaluated the monitoring of teachers' delivery of the programme; learning walks and pupil voice.

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework and will be reviewed annually. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy such as:

PSHE Policy
Science Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
RE Policy
Anti-bullying Policy
Behaviour Policy
Computing Policy