

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

“With Jesus, we love, we learn and we grow”

Please also see the PSHE Policy

‘I have come that you might have life and have it to the full’

John 10:10

Mission Statement

St Teresa’s offers a strong, caring community based on its Catholic traditions, and remains an inclusive environment that welcomes pupils from all backgrounds, faiths and none. This policy supports our school aim “to promote high standards of personal behaviour and the development of moral and spiritual values” as well as our school values of:

- **Faith**
- **Character**
- **Community**
- **Compassion**
- **Intellect**

Aims of this Policy

In this policy, the Governors and teachers, in partnership with parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE) in this school. Consultation takes place with parents through an online parent survey and a review of the curriculum content takes place annually with governors and staff (including the school nurse and Chaplain). This policy is reviewed annually by the Head of Prep, RSE Coordinator, Governing Body and staff.

Defining Relationships and Sex 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 pupil’s knowledge and understanding of herself 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 the Prep School, the focus is 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, people 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.

Rationale

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full' (John 10.10)

The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins our approach to all relationship and sex education at St Teresa's. 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. 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 framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and is integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, psychological, social and intellectual development of pupils. It 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.

Values and Virtues

Our programme reflects 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.

Aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at St Teresa's

Our school values and Mission Statement commit us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, psychological, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that 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, 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

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.

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;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

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.

Inclusion and Differentiated Learning

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 the pupils 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. (In looking at these questions, it is important to draw links to the school's inclusion policy).

Equalities Obligations

The governing body have 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, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked-after children.

Delivery of RSE

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

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- trigger drawings
- values clarification

Resources

St Teresa's Prep School has chosen to follow the programme 'A Journey in Love' alongside Ten Ten's programme 'Life to the Full'. Both programmes are recommended and approved by the

Diocese of Arundel and Brighton as well as the national Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Assessment and Recording

A record of each session is kept in each teacher's planning for the delivery of RSE. The programme will be assessed, monitored and evaluated by the RSE Coordinator/Head of Prep in accordance with the school's monitoring and evaluation policy. Pupils are given the opportunity for self-evaluation at an age appropriate level.

Working with Parents

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 in educating their children. Parents are invited to review this policy annually and are sent a summary of what is to be covered in each year group (Appendix A) to provide a clear overview and to give them the opportunity to seek further clarification. Parents will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered (Years 5 and 6) and have the opportunity to attend an information evening in order that they can view resources and be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

We acknowledge that the Education Act 1993 gives parents the right to withdraw their children from any, or all, of the school's Relationship and Sex Education programme except 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 of Prep. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning. We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. Please refer to the DfE guidance Page 17 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

Balanced Curriculum

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 these issues. Pupils will also receive clear scientific information. 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.

Responsibility for Teaching the Programme

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lies with the class teachers. In Years 5 and 6, some aspects of the programme will be covered in Science and PE by those specialist teachers and the school nurse is also involved.

However, all 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 also contribute to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- 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 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.

Head of Prep

The Head of Prep takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Diocesan Schools' Service and the Local Education Authority as well as any other appropriate agencies.

RSE Co-ordinator

The RSE Co-ordinator, with the Head of Prep, 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. (They may be supported by the Director of Music as another member of staff with responsibility for safeguarding).

All Staff

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.

Relationship to Other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy etc).

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.

Learning about RSE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSE audit.

Dealing with Sensitive Issues and Responding to Questions

The governors 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 RSE teaching will be undertaken in a whole class context.

Teachers will use their professional judgement when addressing sensitive issues and will answer questions honestly but with due regard given to the nature of the question and the age and maturity of the questioner. Careful consideration will be given to the wide and varied experience and backgrounds of the pupils in their care. In some cases, it may be inappropriate for the teacher to respond to a specific question and the pupil will be referred to her parents if necessary.

Teachers should never feel pressured into discussing their personal views or experiences and should always respect the sensitivity of their position as a teacher in a Catholic school.

Safeguarding

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.

Confidentiality and Advice

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 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 circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g. parents, Head of Prep, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Senior Teacher and Head of Prep 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 programme will be evaluated annually by means of questionnaires or by discussion with staff and parents. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

Dissemination

Copies of this policy will be available to all parents through the school's website and copies can also be obtained through the School Office.

This policy was reviewed by GTI and SRA in September 2024

Appendix A
RSE Overview for St Teresa's Prep School

Year 4	<p>God loves us in our differences. <i>AIM: To make links and connections to show that we are all different. To celebrate these differences as we appreciate that God's love accepts us as we are now and as we change.</i></p> <p><i>Social and Emotional</i> Describe how we all should be accepted and respected; explore how we can contribute to society and make the world we live in a better place; speaking out about things that are unjust locally, nationally and globally.</p> <p><i>Physical</i> Describe how we should treat others making links with the diverse society we live in; celebrate differences; recognise and respect that there are different types of family structures and families of all types can be characterised by love, security and stability.</p> <p><i>Spiritual</i> Celebrate the uniqueness and innate beauty of each of us; recognise that every person is a gift from God; celebrate our uniqueness, gifts and talents through being honest, living truthfully and with integrity.</p>
Year 5	<p>God loves us in our changing and developing. <i>AIM: Show a knowledge and understanding of how we grow in awareness of the physical and emotional changes that accompany puberty – sensitivity, mood swings, anger, boredom etc. and grow further in recognising God's presence in our daily lives.</i></p> <p><i>Social and Emotional</i></p>

	<p>Show knowledge and understanding of emotional relationship changes as we grow and develop from a bay to a teenager.</p> <p><i>Physical</i></p> <p>Show knowledge and understanding of the physical changes in puberty in boys and girls; recognise that sexual development is a natural part of human growth and that physical changes from child to adult means the ability and potential to become a mother and father; menstruation; ovulation; discuss pressure from social media to look and feel a certain way and know that this does not always reflect reality; know how to deal with these external pressures and who can we talk to if we are unsure or do not understand the changes that are happening.</p> <p><i>Spiritual</i></p> <p>Celebrate the joy of growing physically and spiritually; we are made in the image and likeness of God; our body is God’s gift to us and we should respect our bodies, character, personality and giftedness; explore different types of love e.g. parental, romantic, affectionate, selfless and sexual.</p>
<p>Year 6</p>	<p>The wonder of God’s love in creating new life.</p> <p><i>AIM: To develop a secure understanding of what stable, caring relationships are and the different kinds there may be. Focusing on Catholic teaching, children will also know and understand about the conception of a child within marriage.</i></p> <p><i>Social and Emotional</i></p> <p>Develop a secure understanding of what stable and caring relationships are and the different kinds there may be; love and marriage leading to conception; recognise that all types of families are special, unique and loved by God.</p> <p><i>Physical</i></p> <p>Explain how human life is conceived; male and female reproductive organs; sexual intercourse as a joyful expression of love; understand how a child grows within the mother’s womb.</p> <p><i>Spiritual</i></p> <p>Show an understanding of how being made in the image and likeness of God informs decisions and actions when building relationships with others, including life-long relationships the Beatitudes; the Sacrament of Marriage</p>

Next review date: September 2025