

## Sex & Relationships Education (SRE) Policy

We are a Rights Respecting School. We aim to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our practice in school. This should be evidenced by this policy and by what you see, hear, feel and witness in our school.

**Article 3 (Best interests of the child):** The best interests of children must be the primary concern in making decisions that may affect them. All adults should do what is best for children. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. This particularly applies to budget, policy and law makers.

### Longridge St. Wilfrid's RC Primary School Sex & Relationships Education (SRE) Policy

**John's Gospel Chapter 10, Verse 10:** "I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full."

#### School Mission Statement

St. Wilfrid's School has existed since 1871 and is a Roman Catholic voluntary aided school for Catholic children of statutory primary school age.

The school is Christ-centred.

It is supported by the parish and diocesan community in order to help parents in the education and formation of their children in accordance with the promises made at Baptism when their children were first welcomed into the family of the Church.

It aims to help each child to make the most of his or her God-given talents in all areas of the curriculum, including the core and foundation subjects of the National Curriculum.

It provides equality of opportunity for all members of the school. It places great emphasis on engendering an awareness and respect for diversity in the wider community by encouraging involvement within the community.

#### Our Mission Statement and SRE

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child and we believe that Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is an integral part of this education. It is in this context that we commit ourselves, in partnership with parents<sup>1</sup>, to provide children and young people with a "positive and prudent [relationships and] sexual education"<sup>2</sup> which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in the Catholic vision of education and the human person.

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their aims and their approach to RSE in the school.

#### Consultation

This policy was drafted and shared with parents/carers before being adopted by our Governing Body. Our RSE curriculum content has been reviewed with staff and our pupils through the GIFT Chaplaincy Team (see Appendix). Separate SRE lessons for boys and girls now take place from an earlier age due to concerns/discussions with staff, parents/carers regarding the earlier onset of puberty. The parents in Year 5 and 6 are written to annually before specific lessons on puberty/sex education are taught. Annually the parents in Year 6 consultation on this Policy took place with the wider school community e.g. our school nurse and with our full governing body.

#### Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy took place after consultation with the Governors in the Spring term 2020. This policy will be reviewed every year by the Headteacher, the staff and Governing Body.

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<sup>1</sup> Parents is used to refer to carers, guardians and parents.

<sup>2</sup> *Gravissimum Educationis* 1

### Dissemination

The policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Details of the policy and content of the RSE curriculum will be published on the school's web site. Copies of the policy will be available to all registered parents on request and a copy is available in the school office.

### Statutory Curriculum Requirements

The statutory framework that surrounds education about human relationships largely falls within three key areas.

- The National Curriculum (2014)
- Statutory Guidance: 'Sex and Relationships Education Guidance' (2000)
- The Children's Act (2004)

In Catholic education, the reasons for our teaching of RSE go further.

### Aim of Catholic Relationships and Sex Education

The aim of Catholic RSE is rooted in a particular context, that Catholic Christianity is a living tradition of lifelong learning in the knowledge and love of God. This learning is not additional to learning about ourselves and our relationships with others and the world, but constitutive of such learning because it treats of God and of all things, in their relationship to God as their beginning and their end, their origin and destiny.<sup>3</sup>

***'God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God and God lives in him.'***  
***(1 Jn. 4:16)***

***'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.'*** (Jn.10:10)

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

We teach RSE precisely 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 at the heart of God reveals that the desire for fulfilling and flourishing human relationships is God-given. 'Communities are brought into being by the participation of men and women, responding to the divine impulse to love and to be loved – which was implanted by the God who created them.'<sup>4</sup> In short, human beings are not simply created to be relational, but created to love and to be loved just as God is love.

The belief that God became man in Christ animates our approach to RSE. The Incarnation endows the human form with an extraordinary dignity and shows that our relationship with our own bodies is not casual but infused with the Holy Spirit<sup>5</sup>. Humanity is called to embrace Christ's invitation to follow him, because the encounter with Christ gives life a decisive direction – gives life to the full.

The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins our approach to RSE. We believe that everyone possesses a 'basic dignity that comes from God, not from any human quality or accomplishment, not from

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, q.1, ad2; q.1, a. 7. C.

<sup>4</sup> The Common Good in Education, p. 6, Catholic Education Service 1997.

<sup>5</sup> 'Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property ... That is why you should use your body for the glory of God' 1 Cor. 6:19-20

race, or gender, age or economic status'.<sup>6</sup> As a consequence, not only is every member of the school community worthy of great respect but gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework. The school will aim to ensure, through a faith motivated person centred approach that all pupils, appropriate to their age, level of maturity and developmental needs, develop the necessary attitudes and values, the personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding to ensure that they have the capacity to make sound judgements, good choices and enjoy relationships based on love, mutual respect, dignity and responsibility free from any abuse or exploitation and to accept their own and others' sexuality in positive ways and as a gift essential to their personal identity.

### 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 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: love, mercy, compassion, faithfulness, temperance (chastity), fortitude and prudence.

Our approach acknowledges that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

### Defining Relationships and Sex Education

In RSE children will learn about their spiritual, social, moral, emotional and physical development in ways appropriate to their age, level of maturity and developmental needs. We promote and teach the importance of love for relationships, including love's sexual expression in marriage. The teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health will be placed in the context of Catholic Church teaching.

The DFE guidance defines RSE as "lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of 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"<sup>7</sup>. The DFE identifies three main elements: "attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding"<sup>8</sup>.

### 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.

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<sup>6</sup> The Common Good in Education, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, DfEE, 2000

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

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;
- ✓ being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely;
- ✓ 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;
- ✓ fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
- ✓ the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay
- ✓ how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and avoid unintended pregnancy.

### **Entitlement and Delivery**

#### **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 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. 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.

#### **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, pregnancy,

maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation 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.

### Integrated curriculum

The RSE programme will promote Catholic values and virtues in accordance with Church teaching and ensure that pupils are offered a range of viewpoints on issues. Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE (in secondary schools<sup>9</sup> relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. ***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.***

The governors 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. Governors 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. (See also Sex and Relationship Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000, Department for Education and Employment, July 2000 for more detail)

### Our SRE Programme and Resources

An Appendix to this policy provide further information about the programme and resources for suggested use. Teaching strategies will include age appropriate activities suggested in our scheme 'A Journey in Love' and question and answer sessions for pupils. Pupils' learning will be assessed by the marking of work produced and teacher questioning.

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Parents

Parents are the primary educators of their children. The school seeks to support and not replace them in this task. We recognise that parents sometimes experience and express difficulty in discussing RSE with their children. Support, understanding and advice will be offered to parents to deal with sensitive issues they may need to address. Parents 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.

Parents have been consulted about this policy before it was ratified by the governing body.

The school will also provide parents with opportunities for consultation on the RSE programme including during the process of its review and evaluation. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme. Our aim is that every parent will have full confidence in the school's RSE policy and programme.

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<sup>9</sup> Secondary refers to High Schools, Colleges and Academies with either 11-16, 11-18 or 16-18 age groups.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RSE 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 Headteacher. The school will support parents by providing material to help the children with their learning. See Appendix for copy of letter to parents.

### **Governors**

The Foundation Governors of Catholic schools are appointed by the Bishop in order to promote and safeguard the Catholic character of the school. Governors will consult on the policy and approve the RSE policy in accordance with the Catholic character of the school and in line with other policies. Governors will ensure that the policy is made available to parents and ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children. Governors will provide an effective system for the monitoring and evaluation of the RSE policy, programme and resources used. Finally, governors will ensure that the RSE policy places RSE within PHSE and provides effective coverage of the relevant National Curriculum science orders.

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Vicariate for Education and appropriate agencies.

### **PSHE/RSE Leader**

The PSHE Leader with the Headteacher has 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 Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Responsibility for teaching the specific RSE programme lays with our teachers of SRE.

The PSHE 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 programme will be evaluated by discussion with pupils, 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.

### **Teachers of RSE**

All teachers should actively contribute to the guardianship of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their pupils as well as fostering academic progress. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic character of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE.

### **All Staff**

RSE is a whole school issue. Every member of staff has a duty of care to uphold the dignity of all. 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 relationships between staff, other adults and pupils. They will also be contributing to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

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.

### **Outside Agencies and External Staff**

Support and guidance from outside agencies and health professionals will always complement the current RSE programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. The school's leadership will inform any external visitor of the school's policy and Catholic character so they are clear about their role and responsibility when delivering a session in a Catholic context. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools' and the diocesan protocol for visitors to Catholic schools.<sup>10</sup>

### **Safeguarding**

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues discussed in RSE. 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. Where a teacher has any concerns they are required to follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

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<sup>10</sup> Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools, CES, Feb. 2011

## **Appendix**

### Our SRE Scheme Contents

#### **A Journey in Love: Volume 1 - Book**

A Journey in Love is a developmental programme for children in the primary years. It is the recommended programme of study for Catholic schools for Sex and Relationship Education, and has been written so that year on year the children build on their knowledge and awareness.

The authors have collaborated with teachers and advisors over several years to produce this valuable and much needed resource for primary schools classes on sex and relationship education. The book is intended to support teachers and parents in catholic schools, enabling the holistic growth of children's' understanding of human relationships.

Contents:

NURSERY - Wonder at God's Love

RECEPTION - God loves each of us in our uniqueness

YEAR ONE - We meet God's love in our family

YEAR TWO - We meet God's love in the community

YEAR THREE - How we live in love

YEAR FOUR - God loves us in our differences

YEAR FIVE - God loves me in my changing and development (Puberty)

YEAR SIX - The wonder of God's love in creating new life (Sexual Intercourse)

JOURNEY OF LIFE

SOME PERSPECTIVES ON MARRIAGE



Example of Our Annual letter to parents/carers

1<sup>st</sup> November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Re: Sex and Relationships Education at St Wilfrid's**

Sex and Relationships Education at our school is taught on an annual basis through a scheme which delivers a series of specially designed lessons. We wanted a scheme which would teach children at an age appropriate level about an understanding of their gender and its implications for successful relationships and one which as a Catholic school does not contradict the church's teaching. We therefore decided to implement a scheme called 'A Journey in Love' which has a series of age appropriate lessons from Reception right through to Year 6 and is aligned to our beliefs and values as Catholics.

Within this scheme, it is not until Year 5 that puberty, body changes and menstruation are covered and the physical act of sexual intercourse is not introduced until Year 6. To avoid embarrassment to the children in these year groups, lessons will be taught separately as boys and girls, with Mr McHugh delivering the lessons to the boys in both Year 5 and 6.

The scheme will be delivered in all classes the week beginning **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November**. Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from sex education but not from science education. Therefore, it is only the year 5/6 parents who can withdraw their children from these lessons. If this is the case and you wish your child to withdraw from these lessons then please contact Mr McHugh directly. Any parents, with children in any year group, who wish to see the content of the scheme their child will experience in their class, please contact your child's teacher.

Thanking you in anticipation of your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

Mr McHugh

