



"Happy together in God's family,
we love, grow and learn."

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX POLICY

Mission Statement

Happy together in God's family, we love, grow and learn.

Outline of Consultation Process and Policy Formation

The following policy has taking into account the views of the Diocese; Governors; RE Leader; Staff and Parents.

Guiding Principles

- We believe that God is love
- We believe everyone is created in God's image
- We believe that Jesus shows us the fullness of life
- We believe that the Church guides us
- We believe in forgiveness, healing and Christ's victory
- *We believe that God is love* - God exists as a unity of persons in perfect loving relationship: God the Father and God the Son are united in a reciprocal bond of love who is God the Holy Spirit. In short, God is love and has revealed himself as a God of loving intimate communion who creates human beings in His image.
- *We believe everyone is created in God's image* - Authentic Catholic formation and guidance in understanding and promoting education in personal relationships is underpinned by the foundational belief that every human being is created in God's image. Every human life is a gift from God and possesses an intrinsic dignity which deserves respect. The inestimable value of human life is the source of personal and communal responsibilities. Every person is called to reflect God's love by sharing in loving relationships with God and with others, both now, here on earth, and fully in heaven.
- *We believe that Jesus shows us the fullness of life* - The supreme value of human existence is shown by God's Son having become a human being in the person of Jesus Christ. By His life, death and resurrection, Jesus reveals how to live life to the full. He founded the Church with His authority to preach the Gospel message of love, forgiveness and hope, and called people to follow Him as disciples who witness to their faith in words and actions.
- *We believe that the Church guides us* - The teaching of Christ, as received, interpreted and handed on by His Church, is the basis for Catholic education in personal relationships. Integral to this is Catholic belief about the truth and meaning of human sexuality. God created human beings male and female. Their sexuality and complementarity are good and blessed. God has revealed that human sexuality is ordered towards marriage where husband and wife share an intimate self-giving. This commitment to life-long mutual love finds expression in sexual intercourse, uniting the spouses

to each other and to God as they share in the creation of new life. Catholic teaching on sexuality flows from the premise that marriage is the proper and worthy context for sexual activity.

- *We believe in forgiveness, healing and Christ's victory* - Many people, not least the young, face challenges related to issues of relationship and human sexuality. We are created for love, but also encounter the reality of brokenness and sin in our lives and in our world. Some will have direct personal experience of this; others will be affected by the actions or circumstances of people around them. It is therefore important that appropriate pastoral sensitivity should accompany formation and guidance in understanding the truth and implications of Catholic teaching. Faith in Christ and his victory over sin and death means that there is always hope. Whatever difficulties people might encounter in showing respect and honour for human persons, human dignity, and human sexuality, forgiveness is possible through the ministry of reconciliation which Jesus entrusted to the Church. Encouraging people to find healing and a new beginning, to grow in virtue and to desire holiness, is an essential part of the Church's mission.

Rationale and Context for Education in Sex and Relationships

Following the *Guiding Principles*, the Catholic character of the school requires that, in the specific area of Education in Sex and Relationships, the leadership and management of St Mary's school, working with foundation governors, will:

- ensure that the school seeks to remain faithful to Catholic belief and teaching on matters of faith and morality.
- promote Catholic belief and teaching concerning human dignity and relationships and, in particular, encourage an understanding of and respect for the sanctity of human life, the virtue of chastity, and the sacrament of marriage.
- oversee the delivery of education in sex and relationships to guarantee its faithfulness to the belief and teaching of the Catholic Church (this includes the content of teaching and resources) so that it excludes anything which risks reducing the understanding of sexuality to the level of a mere bodily function, biological process or recreational activity.
- recognise the primary role of parents in the education of their children and, 'in particular, sex education is a basic right of the parents and must always be carried out under their close supervision. The school recognises that education in sex and relationships is done in the name of parents, with their consent and with their authorisation. Consequently, any school based education in sex and relationships must always be carried out in direct consultation with parents.
- demonstrate pastoral sensitivity for the cultural, personal and family circumstances of children and young people while maintaining the integrity of Catholic belief and teaching.
- enable the formation of children and young people through a consistent application of Catholic belief and teaching on matters of faith and morality across the whole curriculum and from all staff.

- monitor the involvement and teaching of external agencies/visiting speakers, and the distribution of resources within school provided by them – in order that all presentations and content are in accordance with the belief and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Following the *Guiding Principles*, the leadership and management of the school, working with governors, and giving due regard to the Catholic character of the school, will ensure that in the specific area of education in sex and relationships, St Mary's school promotes:

(a) An approach that presents the teaching of the Catholic Church on matters of sex and relationships, rooted in the biblical presentation of the human person who is made in the image of God to love and to be loved, as a positive and consistent ethic for life encouraging pupils and young people to enter into proper and fulfilling relationships. Such an approach will guard against a discouraging and negative presentation of Catholic Church teaching which comes across as a series of random and arbitrary prohibitions.

(b) A developmental approach which gives gradual and positive education in sex and relationships to enable children and young people to have accurate information, seek to develop a properly formed conscience to make right judgements, and to take right actions in the many and varied situations in which they may find themselves. Pupils and young people will need time to reflect on what they are taught. They will need to ask questions and articulate their thoughts and anxieties in a context of respect and trust.

(c) A whole person approach which accepts that pupils and young people are sexual beings who have received their sexuality as a gift from God and which is something essential to personal identity: 'Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being ... of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love. Therefore, it is an integral part of the development of the personality and of its educative process'.

Catholic schools have a responsibility to ensure that the information given to pupils and young people is received in the context of the teaching of the Catholic Church and, therefore, based on sound theological principles. This positive approach excludes anything which risks reducing the understanding of sexuality to the level of a mere bodily function, biological process or recreational activity.

(d) A whole school approach to education in sex and relationships which is transmitted in the context of the Catholic life of the school through a cohesive set of guiding principles which are informed by the mission statement and flow from the Gospel of Christ and the virtues. 'Pupils and young people will have different maturation rates and different levels of sexual awareness. The pressures on them, from society and the media, often subliminal, cannot be underestimated. The school must be ready to accompany them on their journey to adulthood, modelling for them and enabling them to become capable of right and proper relationships. Consequently, while a senior member of staff should be responsible for the development and co-ordination of the necessary programmes, it is a responsibility shared by the whole staff, with the whole

range of the curriculum contributing to the formation of right moral attitudes in our children and young people'.

(e) Loving relationships between people so that the love experienced by pupils, students and staff is founded on the Christ-centred impulse to love and to be loved.

(f) A framework for living out these relationships anchored in the principles which flow from the Gospel and the practice of the virtues: faith, hope, love, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, chastity; and the fruits of the Holy Spirit, charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, and self-control.

(g) All that is worthy in relationships such as love, respect, honesty, generosity, kindness, gentleness etc. and rejects abuse and exploitation.

(h) An approach to human life which promotes its God-given dignity, goodness and sanctity, its joy and wonder and seeks to awaken pupils and students to their most creative possibilities so that gifts and talents can be placed at the service of God and the community.

(i) The positive presentation and encouragement to live modestly by respecting the dignity of oneself and others, especially with regard to our sexuality, and with chastity which can guide us to make personal choices which are responsible, mature and recognise that sexual intimacy is for the purpose of love and new life within marriage.

(j) Respect for the child's sense of delicacy and privacy concerning sexual matters, and protection of children and young people from lessons or materials in human sexuality which are explicit, premature or misleading.

(k) Marriage as the equal union of man and woman who love each other and commit to each other before God and the community. Marriage is the place for the sexual expression of loving intimacy which is open to life. Christian marriage expresses the truth about love and can serve as a prophetic proclamation of a human being's real needs: that a man and a woman are called upon from the beginning to live in a communion of life and love, and that this communion leads to a strengthening of the dignity of the spouses, the good of the children and of society itself.

Definition of Education in Sex and Relationships

As a Catholic school, our role is to nurture the development of the whole person. Children, will learn about their spiritual, social, moral, emotional and physical development in ways appropriate to their age, level of maturity and developmental needs because their ability to form loving, caring, happy, strong, healthy, stable relationships is based upon this lifelong learning. Parents are the primary educators in this regard. This development is also fostered in many areas of the school curriculum and includes aspects of character such

as self-respect, confidence and responsibility, and fundamentally an understanding of oneself as a unique and beautiful part of God's creation. The centrality of self-giving love, the importance of love for relationships, including love's sexual expression in marriage is taught and promoted. The teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health will be placed in the context of Catholic Church teaching. Education in sex and relationships will reflect on and explore family life and relationships because it is in the family that children first experience love, affection, respect, saying sorry, forgiveness and other ways of relating to others.

It is in this Catholic context that the definition of SRE, given in DfE guidance is understood. This guidance states that SRE is the 'lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.

Education for sex and relationships provided in this school will seek to build on the child's own experience, sensitive to the varied home background of individual pupils. It will incorporate through its aim, objectives, content, and teaching, the three main elements of SRE – attitudes and values, personal and social skills, knowledge and understanding within a Catholic context.

Aim of Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships

Catholic education in sex and relationships aims to support parents in their role as first educators of their children. Using a faith motivated person-centred approach the school will aim to ensure 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.

Learning Outcomes Key Stages 1 and 2

Key Stage 1 Pupils should be taught to:

- know they are made by God and are precious
- value themselves and others as God's children
- identify and value differences and similarities between people
- recognise their membership of the family and recognise roles of individuals in families
- know and understand that families should care for each other
- know and understand the needs of babies
- recognise the school and the parish as a caring community
- recognise that all are part of God's family
- know and understand the process of growth from young to old and how people's needs change

- know themselves as male or female
- appreciate celebrations marking birthdays and special occasions
- develop their relationship with God through prayer and acts of worship
- know about rituals that mark life, and especially, birth, marriage, death
- listen and co-operate with others
- appreciate relationships, friends, family, working together, sharing, playing together
- know that saying sorry is important
- identify and share their feelings with others and develop an ability to deal with their emotions
- recognise that their feelings and actions affect other people
- identify and be able to talk with someone they trust
- know about being safe, recognise safe and unsafe places, and use simple rules for dealing with strangers or whenever they feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- know the basic rules for keeping themselves healthy
- engage in actions motivated by the life and teaching of Christ

National Curriculum Science

- recognise and compare the main external parts of human bodies
- recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity
- know and understand that animals, including humans, grow and reproduce
- know and understand that humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults

Key Stage 2 Pupils should be taught to:

- value themselves as a child of God, and their body as God's gift to them
- recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves
- appreciate that life is precious and a gift from God
- understand the changes that are beginning to or have taken place in their bodies
- understand that they grow and change throughout life
- recognise as they approach puberty, how emotions can change and how to deal with their feelings towards themselves, their family and others in a positive way
- know and understand their bodies and the need for personal hygiene
- understand the nature of different relationships, marriage, families, friends, communities
- understand that differences and similarities between people can arise from a number of factors, including cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, gender and disability
- recognise and challenge stereotypes
- understand that bullying is wrong and how to get help with bullying
- discuss Jesus' and the Church's teaching on forgiveness and recognise the importance of forgiveness in relationships
- discuss moral questions about relationships in the light of the Bible and Church teaching

- recognise the choices they make and that there are good choices and wrong choices which have consequences
- recognise the need for respect, love and trust to sustain relationships
- begin to appreciate what is involved in bringing up children and what responsibilities parents have
- develop their relationship with God through prayer and acts of worship
- know the rituals celebrated in Church that mark birth, marriage, death
- be more confident in a wide range of new social situations, such as seeking new friends, taking on responsibilities in school and at home
- form opinions about relationships and express them
- listen to, and show respect for, other people's beliefs and viewpoints
- listen to and support their friends and manage friendship problems
- see things from other people's point of view, for example their parents, carers and teachers
- recognise different risks in different situations and appropriate responses
- identify adults they can trust and who they can ask for help
- engage in actions they know are motivated by the life and teaching of Christ National Curriculum Science
- know and understand that the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, movement, growth and reproduction
- know about the main stages of the human life cycle

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents

2.

"Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents" (*The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, Pontifical Council for the Family, 1995).

We recognise parents as the first educators of their children. This is their right and duty, and flows from their natural relationship to each other and to their children. We recognise that parents sometimes experience and express difficulty in discussing sex and relationships with their children. The school seeks to support, and not replace them in this situation. Support, understanding and advice will be offered to parents to deal with sensitive issues they may need to address.

- (a) The school will provide in advance the opportunity for consultation and involvement in the Education in Sex and Relationships programme for parents of children in years 5 and 6.
- (b) The school sees Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships as an integral part of the religious dimension of school life and asks that parents, who may wish to withdraw their child from the programme, to discuss their intention, in the first instance, with the headteacher or the delegated

senior leader. However, parents are entitled to withdraw their child (up to age 19) from any or all sessions of the programme and for any reason, except that taught within National Curriculum Science. Parents who do withdraw their children should be alerted to possible consequences such as their children not developing a full understanding of the different aspects of SRE education. Children may also hear about the content of lessons from other children and this may be an inappropriate and unsafe way for such information to be shared. Parents must inform the school in writing in advance if they intend to withdraw their child so that alternative and appropriate supervision can be made.

- (c) Parents' concerns or objections to the content or delivery of the Education in Sex and Relationships programme should be addressed in the first instance to the delegated senior leader or headteacher. Should this fail to resolve the matter then the school's complaints procedure should be followed and if necessary contact with the Governing Body.

2. Diocese

Guided and inspired by the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, we hold that the human person is a spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical unity. All education must be of the whole person. This Catholic school is part of a family of schools and parishes, and is established in order that the education of the children in this school can be taught as an integral part of the Catholic Faith.

It is part of the duty of the Bishop of the Diocese of Leeds under the Law of the Church (*Can. 796-806*) to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools in his area and with the Trustees of the Diocese to ensure that the formation and education provided in such schools are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine.

3. Governors

The Foundation Governors of Catholic schools are appointed by the Bishop in order to promote and safeguard the Catholic character of the school.

- (a) The governors of this Catholic school of the Leeds Diocese acknowledge and intend to promote the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church in the fulfilment of their ecclesial and statutory duties, for the benefit of the children in their care.
- (b) They recognise that the parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children, and that parents have special rights and duties over education in personal relationships. The governors intend to comply with statutory requirements.

4. Headteachers and delegated responsibility

- (a) The headteacher has overall responsibility for implementing the Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships programme and its integration into the school's curriculum and Catholic life.

- (b) Headteachers have a particular duty to respect and support the primary role of parents in this field.
- (c) The headteacher may appoint a Coordinator for Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships – a suitable person appropriately trained. The headteacher or delegated senior person will ensure that any discussion or treatment of sexuality in the school curriculum is consistent with Catholic teaching. They will assist colleagues to acquire and present up-to-date knowledge of the vision and teaching of the Catholic Church in this field.
- (d) The headteacher or delegated senior person will provide parents with full information about the proposed Catholic Education for Sex and Relationships programme before it is initiated, and will obtain parental consent in respect of each child before the child is allowed to participate in the programme. Opportunities for consultation and involvement will also be offered.

5. Staff

- (a) Teachers and all those contributing to Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships are expected to work within the values framework as described in the guiding principles and policy document, in line with the school's ethos.
- (b) Appropriate development and training facilitated by the Diocese will be undertaken. It will accord fully with the approach of the Catholic Church and take into account current statutory requirements.

6. Outside speakers; off-site elements

- (a) Any Catholic education in sex and relationships provision will be based in school or in a diocesan approved centre to maintain the closest link with parents. The Bishop's approval secured through the *Office for Education and Schools* will be obtained for alternative off-site provision, before the event.
- (b) It is the intention that, in those circumstances where any person from outside the school is to talk to an individual pupil or group of pupils about education in sex and relationships, such persons will, under the supervision of an appropriately trained member of school staff, do so within the principles and guidelines of this policy with particular concern for the primary role of the parents of the child in this area.
- (c) The involvement of the School Nurse or any on-site health clinic in education in sex and relationships must be set within the context of this policy. The School's leadership have agreed the expectations and parameters for the work of the School Nurse or on-site clinic. No external agency can work in school and give advice that counteracts Catholic Church teaching. Equally, members of staff in this Catholic school do not give advice on contraception and other aspects of sexual behaviour contrary to Church teaching. In circumstances where a pupil or young person is at some risk, advice will be sought from the headteacher or delegated senior teacher.

Entitlement and Equal Opportunities

This policy needs to be read and understood in conjunction with the school's Equality policy.

Organisation of Catholic Education in Sex and Relationships – time allocation/pupil grouping, cross-curricular links SRE is taught through RE and Science as well as other areas of the curriculum by way of a cross curricular, integrated approach encompassing Elements of PSHE; Citizenship and Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL).

An integrated approach is followed during year 5 and 6 in the summer term when one week is given to explicit teaching on sex education. This is delivered by class teachers using resources from 'All that I Am' a resource published by The Diocesan of Birmingham Religious Education Department.

All staff realise the obligation to deliver SRE in their role as class teachers or support staff. Staff also recognise the need for close co-operation with each other and other subject areas in order to ensure a holistic approach to SRE.

Evaluation

The Senior Leadership team and the RE leader will evaluate the delivery of the programme to inform future effectiveness of the programme.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Teachers and other members of staff cannot promise complete confidentiality. Disclosures by pupils and young people to members of staff that indicate that they are being abused or are at some risk of abuse will be referred by those members of staff to the person responsible for safeguarding in the school. The school will always follow local authority procedures when dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues.

Policy Review

This policy will be monitored bi-annually by the RE leader and will be reviewed by the Governing Body on a bi-annual basis. Any change will be discussed with parents before being implemented.