



Policy on Relationship and Sex Education

St Jerome's Catholic Primary School

“Growing in God's Love”

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Our school's policy on relationship and sex education is based on the DfE document 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (DfES 0116/2000). Catholic schools are also required to deliver RSE in accordance with the teaching of the Church. This approach is compatible with the guidance issued by the DfE. We recognise 'Relationship and Sex Education' as the policy's full title, but, for brevity's sake we will refer to RSE.
- 1.2 In the DfE document, RSE is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development'. The guidance states, 'It is about understanding 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'.
- 1.3 RSE is part of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum in our school. When we inform our pupils through sex education about sexual issues, we do this with regard to morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 We teach children about:
- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
 - the way humans reproduce;
 - respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship;
 - the importance of family life;
 - moral questions;
 - relationship issues;
 - respect for the views of other people;

3 Context

- 3.1 We teach about RSE in the context of the school's aims and values. While RSE in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code, and of the values which underpin all our work. We teach RSE on the understanding that:
- it is taught in the context of marriage and family life;
 - it is part of a wider process of social, personal, spiritual and moral education;
 - children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
 - children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity;
 - it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect;
 - children need to learn the importance of self-control.

4 The National Healthy School Standard

- 4.1 We have achieved the National Healthy Schools Award in 2009, which promotes health education. As participants in this scheme, we:
- consult with parents on all matters of health education policy;
 - train all our teachers to teach about sex and relationships education
 - listen to the views of the children in our school regarding sex and relationships education;
 - look positively at any local initiatives that support us in providing the best sex and relationships education programme that we can devise.

5 Organisation

- 5.1 We teach about RSE through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main RSE education in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also do some RSE through other subject areas (e.g. science and PE) which we believe contribute significantly to children's knowledge and understanding of their own bodies, and how they are changing and developing.
- 5.2 In PSHE, we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We teach about the parts of the body, and how these work, and we explain to the children what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, we teach the children that boys' voices will change during puberty, and we explain menstruation to both boys and girls. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.
- 5.3 In science lessons, in both Key Stages, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of our teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 1, we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the fact that people are not all the same, and that we need to respect each other. In Key Stage 2, we teach about life processes, and the main stages of the human life cycle, in greater depth.
- 5.4 After consultation with governors and parents, the school has adopted: A Journey in Love as a scheme of work for RSE.

The following topics are studied in "A Journey in 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
- YEAR SIX - The wonder of God's love in creating new life

These are replacing the "In the Beginning" topics:

- Year One - God's Creation
- Year Two – God Made Me
- Year Three – Reproduction of Flowers
- Year Four – Reproduction of Fish
- Year 5 – Reproduction of Rabbits
- Year 6 – Human Relationships including Reproduction

- 5.5 In Years 5 & 6, we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the Local Health Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how children's bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.
- 5.6 We arrange a meeting for all parents and carers of children in Years 5 & 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are, and how they are taught, and to see the materials the school uses in its teaching.

6 The role of parents

- 6.1 The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective, we:
- inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice;
 - answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE of their child;
 - take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for RSE in the school;
 - encourage parents to be involved in reviewing school practice and making modifications to it as necessary;
 - inform parents about the best practice known with regard to RSE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.
 - We believe that through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.
- 6.2 Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the RSE programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from RSE lessons, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

7 The role of other members of the community

- 7.1 We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our RSE programme.

8 Confidentiality

- 8.1 Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will not try to investigate, but will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns. The headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals (see also our policy on Child Protection).

9 The role of the headteacher

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our RSE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach about sex effectively, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- 9.2 The headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school's RSE programme, and ensures that all adults who work with our children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and work within its framework.
- 9.3 The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis, and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1 The Curriculum and Pastoral Care Committee of the governing body monitors the impact of our RSE policy. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the RSE programme, and makes a record of all such comments.
- 10.2 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed: K. Monaghan

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