

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Chiswick

"Living and learning, inspired by our faith"

RSE Policy



Autumn 2026

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Chair of Governors

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Introduction and Aims

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School follows the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church in our daily life through Celebration of the Liturgy and through following the values taught in the Gospel of Jesus 'living and learning, inspired by our faith'. We recognise the dignity of every human person because they are a child of God, made in His image. Equality of opportunity for every person is therefore paramount and precludes all forms of discrimination on grounds of colour, gender, race, social class or ability. We aim to nurture the spiritual, intellectual and physical growth of each pupil through a holistic approach, taking into account the needs of every child while, at the same time, striving for excellence in all aspects of education within a secure environment. We believe that RSE is an integral part of this education.

In a Catholic school, any teaching or information on human love or human development must be within the whole context of our faith in God, who reveals himself in Jesus Christ. It is through our love of God and of our neighbour that we reciprocate that love. For many Christians this happens through the love between a man and woman. Marriage is a commitment in which many Christians can meet Christ through the adventure of learning to love one another. It is the consistent teaching of the Church through the centuries that it is only in the context of marriage that sexual love can take on its true meaning. Marriage is a mutual commitment of total fidelity which is open to the gift of life. In the culture in which we live it is vital that our young people understand the importance of commitment for life. It is only through commitment that the deepest lessons of love can be learnt. As Christians we recognise in joy that God has given himself to us completely in love and we respond to that love with the whole of our lives.

RSE contributes to the Catholic life and mission of St Mary's Catholic Primary School by helping pupils to understand that every human person is created in the image and likeness of God and possesses inherent dignity. The curriculum encourages pupils to develop virtues such as respect, compassion, responsibility, honesty, kindness, self-control, courage and chastity. Pupils are encouraged to recognise that relationships should reflect the love of God and the dignity of every person. RSE therefore supports the school's wider mission of enabling pupils through 'living and learning, inspired by our faith'. RSE also contributes to the Catholic Social Teaching principle of human dignity and supports pupils in understanding their responsibility towards themselves, others and the wider community

Rationale

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

We are involved in relationships and sex 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 RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals. 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 the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education, Relationships Education and Health Education will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as they are concerned with nurturing human wholeness and are integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It will also be delivered in conjunction with teaching the Religious Education programme and as part of the statutory element of the Science National Curriculum. 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. Support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values and to develop respectful relationships with others. RSE will be taught in accordance with the principles set down in other relevant school policies such as Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Safeguarding.

We use the Ten Ten Resource 'Life to the Full' to deliver Relationships Education and relevant RSE curriculum content within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church.

Statutory Requirements

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

- Statutory Relationships Education, which is taught to all pupils in primary school
- Statutory Health Education, which includes aspects of physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing
- Statutory Science, including the biological knowledge relating to human growth and reproduction

The school also chooses to teach additional sex education content beyond the statutory requirements. Where additional sex education is provided, it will be taught in an age-appropriate manner, within the Catholic ethos of the school and in accordance with this policy. We do this to ensure that all our pupils

receive reliable and correct information in a safe and secure learning environment, which will enable them to understand how to make sensible and informed decisions.

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
- Respect, compassion and kindness towards others
- An understanding that every person has inherent dignity and should be treated with respect.

To develop the following personal and social skills:

- Making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity and 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 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
- Recognising appropriate boundaries in relationships and understanding the importance of privacy, consent and seeking help when boundaries are not respected
- Knowing how and when to seek help from trusted adults and appropriate sources of support.

To know and understand:

- The Church's teaching on relationships and the 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
- How to recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships
- How to keep safe, including online
- How to identify trusted adults and seek help when something does not feel right

- The importance of respecting personal privacy and the privacy of others
- How to respond to pressure, inappropriate behaviour, bullying and abuse
- That abuse is never the fault of the child

Outcomes

Through the RSE curriculum, pupils should develop age-appropriate knowledge, understanding, vocabulary, attitudes and skills which enable them to:

- Understand that they are created, chosen and loved by God
- Recognise the dignity and uniqueness of themselves and others
- Understand how to develop healthy and respectful relationships
- Recognise appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and boundaries
- Know how to keep themselves safe, including online
- Understand the physical and emotional changes associated with growing up and puberty
- Develop knowledge of human reproduction appropriate to their age and stage
- Know who they can speak to if they are worried, upset or unsafe
- Understand that they have a right to be treated with dignity and respect
- Apply their learning to age-appropriate situations and make safe and responsible choices
- Explain how their learning connects with the Catholic understanding of the human person, dignity, relationships, virtue and love. Assessment of RSE will focus on pupils' knowledge, understanding, vocabulary, ability to apply learning and ability to make safe and respectful choices. Assessment will not require pupils to disclose personal or private experiences.

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, culture and family circumstances. RSE 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. In looking at these questions, it is important to draw links to the school's Inclusion, Behaviour and Relationships and Safeguarding policies.

Equality

We will make reasonable adjustments where necessary to ensure that pupils with SEND and other individual needs are able to access RSE teaching appropriately. Teachers will consider pupils' developmental stage, maturity, additional needs and any relevant safeguarding or pastoral information when planning and delivering lessons.

Broad Context 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. Life to the Full is a fully resourced Scheme of Work in Relationships Education for Catholic primary schools which embraces and fulfils the statutory curriculum. Taught with a spiral approach to learning, in which pupils will revisit the same topics at an age-appropriate stage through their school life, the programme includes teaching about personal health, physical and emotional wellbeing, strong emotions, private parts of the body, personal relationships, family structures, trusted adults, growing bodies, puberty, periods, life cycles, online safety, where babies come from, an understanding of the Common Good and living in the wider world.

The entire teaching is underpinned with a religious understanding that our deepest identity is as a child of God - created, chosen and loved by God. The programme is fully inclusive of all pupils and their families.

Our 'Life to the Full' programme will cover:

Module 1: Created and Loved by God

- Religious Understanding • Me, my body, my health • Emotional well-being • Life cycles

Module 2: Created to Love Others

- Religious Understanding • Personal Relationships • Keeping Safe

Module 3: Created to Live in Community

- Religious Understanding • Living in the Wider World • Families; The content of Relationships Education will cover the statutory themes of: • Friendships; • Respectful relationships; • Online relationships; and • Being safe.

Health Education will also contribute to pupils' understanding of physical and mental wellbeing, changing adolescent bodies, personal hygiene, emotional wellbeing, healthy lifestyles and seeking help. Where content relating to human reproduction is taught through Science, this will be delivered in accordance with the statutory Science curriculum. Any additional sex education taught beyond statutory Science will be identified in the school's curriculum planning and taught in accordance with this policy.

Working with Parents

We recognise that parents (and other carers) 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. Therefore we will support parents and carers 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 about the RSE curriculum, including the content and purpose of lessons, and will be given appropriate information about particularly sensitive aspects of learning in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning. We will seek to work in partnership with parents and carers and will provide opportunities for consultation and feedback regarding RSE provision.

Withdrawal from RSE

Parents do not have a right to withdraw their children from statutory Relationships Education or Health Education, or from statutory Science. At primary school, parents/carers may request that their child be withdrawn from any additional sex education which is taught beyond the statutory requirements of Relationships Education and Science. We will respect such a request. Where parents/carers wish to request withdrawal from additional sex education, they should contact the Headteacher to request permission. We will discuss the content with the parent/carer and clarify which elements are statutory and which, if any, constitute additional sex education. We will provide appropriate support and information to parents/carers to help them understand the curriculum. We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

In accordance with statutory requirements, the governing body will ensure that the school's RSE policy remains up to date and that parents and carers are proactively consulted whenever the policy is developed or formally reviewed. Copies of the policy will be made available to parents and carers via our school website. Governors will ensure that the policy reflects the statutory requirements for

Relationships Education, Health Education and Science, while also reflecting the Catholic character and teaching of the school. Governors will monitor the implementation and impact of the policy through appropriate reports, curriculum monitoring and school self-evaluation.

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is implemented, that statutory requirements are met and that appropriate safeguarding procedures are followed. The Headteacher will ensure that staff are appropriately supported and that parents/carers are informed about the school's RSE provision.

RSE / PSHE / Science Leaders

These subject leaders will work together to ensure appropriate coverage and progression across the curriculum. They will monitor provision, curriculum planning, teaching, assessment and pupil outcomes and will ensure that RSE is appropriately connected to the Catholic ethos and curriculum of the school.

Teachers

All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress, they should actively contribute to the 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 and the requirements of this policy. Teachers will establish clear ground rules for RSE lessons and will ensure that pupils are not expected or encouraged to disclose personal or private information. Teachers will respond sensitively and appropriately to pupils' questions. Questions which are not appropriate for the age or developmental stage of the class may be addressed individually or, where appropriate, referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a senior leader.

Parents

We recognise that parents are the prime educators of their children and will seek to support them in their task. We will ensure that parents are kept informed of what is happening in RSE in terms of content, delivery and timing and will provide appropriate opportunities for parents to access curriculum information and resources.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

RSE has an important role in supporting the school's safeguarding responsibilities. Pupils will be taught about appropriate and inappropriate boundaries, privacy, personal safety, trusted adults, appropriate and inappropriate touch, online safety, pressure, bullying, exploitation and how to seek help. Staff will remain alert to signs that a pupil may be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns. RSE lessons may sometimes lead pupils to disclose information about their own experiences. Staff must not promise confidentiality to a pupil. Any disclosure or safeguarding concern must be dealt with in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the school's established reporting procedures. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be consulted where there is any concern about a pupil's safety or wellbeing. Pupils will be taught that abuse is never their fault and that they should speak to a trusted adult if they feel worried, unsafe or uncomfortable.

Online Safety

Online safety forms an important part of RSE. Pupils will be taught age-appropriate knowledge and skills relating to online relationships, privacy, personal information, communication, social media, online pressure, inappropriate content, cyberbullying and seeking help. Teaching will reinforce the message that behaviour which is inappropriate or unsafe online should be reported to a trusted adult and that

pupils should not feel ashamed or blame themselves if they encounter something inappropriate online. RSE teaching will be consistent with the school's Online Safety and Computing policies.

Teaching and Learning

RSE will be delivered through a combination of:

- Specific RSE lessons using the 'Life to the Full' programme
- PSHE lessons
- Religious Education
- Science
- Prayer and Liturgy
- The wider Catholic life and ethos of the school
- Appropriate cross-curricular opportunities.

Lessons will be age-appropriate, inclusive and sensitive to the needs of individual pupils. Teachers will establish a safe and respectful environment in which pupils can ask questions and discuss issues without fear of ridicule. Pupils will not be required to discuss their own personal or family experiences.

Children's Questions

Children are naturally curious and may ask questions during RSE lessons. Teachers will respond to questions sensitively, honestly and in an age-appropriate manner, while maintaining the Catholic ethos and values of the school. Teachers will not be expected to answer questions which fall outside the planned curriculum or which are inappropriate for the age or developmental stage of the pupils. Where appropriate, questions may be answered individually rather than in front of the whole class. Teachers may also use an anonymous question system where this is appropriate. Any question or comment which raises a safeguarding concern will be referred immediately in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE subject leader will monitor provision of RSE in the school.

Monitoring and evaluation will include, where appropriate:

- Curriculum planning and progression
- Lesson visits and learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Pupil voice
- Assessment information
- Teacher feedback
- Parent/carer feedback
- Review of resources
- Monitoring of statutory coverage
- Monitoring of the Catholic content and ethos of RSE
- Review of safeguarding and online safety provision
- Identification of strengths and areas for development.

Pupil voice will be used to establish whether pupils understand what they are learning, can explain how their learning links to the Catholic understanding of human dignity and relationships, know how to keep

themselves safe and know who they can speak to if they are worried. The impact of RSE will be considered as part of the school's wider self-evaluation and curriculum monitoring processes.

Resources and External Visitors

We will primarily use the Ten Ten 'Life to the Full' programme and other resources which are consistent with the Catholic ethos of the school and statutory requirements. Any external visitors contributing to RSE will be appropriately vetted and their role, content and resources will be agreed in advance by the school. The class teacher remains responsible for the lesson and pupils' learning when an external visitor is present.

Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Religious Education Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Review

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years, or sooner if there are significant changes to statutory guidance, diocesan guidance, Church teaching or school circumstances. Its implementation and effectiveness will be monitored by school leaders and the governing body. Parents and carers will be proactively consulted whenever the policy is formally reviewed and when significant changes are proposed.