

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College



Approved by:

Date: January 2022

Last reviewed on:
January 2021

Next review due by: January 2023

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for students with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Introduction

As a Catholic college we understand that all our students are of intrinsic and absolute value as they are created by God and in the image of God. With this at the centre of all our teaching, and in particular through our Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) we aim to make our teaching holistic and fitting to the needs of the students. Pope Francis spoke in his apostolic exhortation 'Amoris Laetitia' (Joy of Love) 2016 about the need for, 'a positive and prudent sex education' in our schools and it can only be seen within the broader framework of an education for love, for mutual self-giving.

The RSHE programme at Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College is underpinned by the following Church teachings:

- the dignity and worth of each person made in the image of God
- the importance of individuals coming together in mutual support and regard, to live and work for the good of humankind and the greater glory of God

What is Relationships and Sex Education?

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and social 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.

Whilst our programme meets the requirements set out by the DfE, it is our priority to encourage students to consider the views of the Roman Catholic Church and the value of the human person **by abiding by diocesan guidance**. The key aim of the programme is to provide a teaching that is founded on Roman Catholic understanding of the human person and an appreciation that authentic human love is more than sexual expression, for the human person is made in the image and likeness of God.

Aims of the Programme

The students will be able to:

- Understand their own and others' God given gift of sexuality, developing respect for themselves and others. Meet the challenge and responsibilities that sexuality maturity will bring
- Understand and control their emotions and feelings to enable individuals to interact appropriately, more effectively in groups. Know, identify and understand the physical, emotional moral stages of their development

Objectives

- Know and understand the teachings of beliefs of the Catholic Church on Sexuality and respect for others
- Explore moral values/family values, religious values, gender roles and stereotyping

- Know, identify and understand the physical, emotional and moral stages of their development
- Explore and develop an understanding of a variety of personal relationships from friendship to intimacy
- To provide an opportunity for students to examine their own and others' attitudes to sexual activity and related issues
- To promote an awareness of the pressure on young people to behave in certain ways and to help improve assertiveness and the confidence to cope with such pressure
- Develop a variety of strategies to enable students to make autonomous decisions in a wide range of situations so that they develop a critical questioning of moral viewpoints
- Further develop personal skills and qualities: i.e. listening, questioning, communicating, standpoint taking, valuing the opinion of others, empathy etc.

Confidentiality

- Students must be aware that the classroom is not a confidential area
- The school nurse is available to all students on site, one lunch time a week for personal confidential advice and support
- All college staff can give details of external help and support agencies to students and should explain to students the importance of talking to a parent/carer

Teachers and other staff recognise the importance of listening to the concerns of individual students and are aware that young males sometimes find it more difficult than females to express emotions – careful listening and support is important. If a member of staff deems a pupil to be a risk (illegal or non-consenting activities) the Child Protection Policy must be initiated and the Assistant Headteacher Miss Mason consulted. The pupil will be told of the action. In her absence the Deputy Safeguarding lead teachers will be informed.

Procedures and Practice

We follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) 2019. This is taught both explicitly through PDE and via the wider curriculum; For example science includes the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. As a secondary school we must provide RSHE to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

In teaching RSHE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. In curriculum areas where RSE is delivered, content and methods are designed to be appropriate to the age and general development of students in the group and are sensitive to all religious belief and cultural practices. Outside agencies as appropriate may be engaged when the quality of learning outcome and resources allow.

Guidance from the Catholic Education Service

In designing our programmes of study we have acted in accordance with the following advice:

- Students should be taught from an early age to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. They should be given accurate information. This will enable them to understand difference and help to remove prejudice
- Human sexuality (is a gift of God and) finds its perfect expression within loving life-long marriage. Any other physical sexual expression falls short to some degree of that ideal. It

follows that human sexuality is not fulfilled in self-gratification or in promiscuous or casual relationships

- Traditional (Christian) marriage should be promoted as the fundamental building block of society and of family life and as the proper context for the nurture of children
- Students have a right to develop without being subject to any physical or verbal abuse about sexual orientation or to the encouragement of sexual activity
- Life-long celibacy can be fulfilling. In this way of life an individual's sexual instincts may be channelled into generous love and service of others
- Life-long human friendships are an important gift and should be honoured and cherished
- Human beings fall short of the ideal but the admission of failure can bring forgiveness and reconciliation. People can change their behaviour. Couples working through problems within marriage can find deeper love and strengthened

Who delivers Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships, Sex and Health Education is not limited to any one department, however much of the RSHE curriculum is taught by RE teachers in KS3. RSHE is also taught in Science, the Pastoral Curriculum and is built upon through Personal Development Health days.

Reinforcement of the taught programme and further opportunities for learning arise on an informal level and in particular through assemblies and discussion in Physical Education, English etc. This is enhanced through individual guidance and counselling.

Curriculum Objectives

Teachers aim to develop and teach in a safe environment, an atmosphere of mutual support and respect. Students should be encouraged to express their own views and have respect for the views of others. Relationships, Sex and Health Education should not be seen as simply imparting information but is a development of attitudes and values, developing people of good character.

Teachers are aware that students have experience of a range of ideas and information from a variety of media sources and many of these will be contrary to the values of the Catholic and Christian Community. Catholic virtues and values will always be promoted and upheld.

RSHE Content

Key Stage 3 (age 11-14, Years 7 – 9) The RSHE Curriculum addresses three main themes:

Theme 1: Created and Loved by God - The Christian imperative to love self, made in the image and likeness of God, shows an understanding of the importance of valuing and understanding oneself as the basis for personal relationships.

Theme 2: Created to love others - God is love. We are created out of love and for love. The command to love is the basis of all Christian morality.

Theme 3: Created to live in community (local, national and global) - Human beings are relational by nature and live in the wider community. Through our exchange with others, our mutual service and through dialogue, we attempt to proclaim and extend the Kingdom of God for the good of individuals and the good of society.

These themes aim to nurture the following personal qualities and values:

- Growing to be respectful of our bodies, character and giftedness
- Appreciative for blessings
- Grateful to others and to God

- Self-disciplined and able to delay or forego gratification for the sake of greater goods
- Discerning in their decision making
- Determined and resilient in the face of difficulty
- Courageous in the face of new situations and in facing their fears
- Loyal, able to develop and sustain friendships
- Compassionate, able to empathise with the suffering of others and the generosity to help others in trouble
- Respectful, able to identify other people's personal space and respect the ways in which they are different
- Forgiving, developing the skills to allow reconciliation in relationships
- Courteous in their dealings with friends and strangers
- Honesty, committed to living truthfully and with integrity
- Just, understanding the impact of their actions locally, nationally and globally
- Self-giving, able to put aside their own wants in order to serve others locally, nationally and globally
- Prophetic in their ability to identify injustice and speak out against it locally, nationally and globally

Students will be taught:

Theme 1: Created and Loved by God

- To appreciate sensual pleasure as a gift from God
- To recognise that sexuality is a God-given gift and that sexual intercourse is the most intimate expression of human love and should be delayed until marriage
- The Church's teaching on the morality of natural and artificial methods of managing fertility
- To understand the need for reflection to facilitate personal growth and the role prayer can play in this
- To understand that their uniqueness, value and dignity derive from God and hence recognise the respect they should have for themselves
- To recognise that they are responsible for their own behaviour and how to inform their conscience
- To recognise their personal strengths
- To distinguish 'needs' from 'wants'
- They have a right not to have an intimate relationship until the appropriate time and that any level of intimacy which makes them feel uncomfortable is never appropriate
- To appreciate all five senses and to be able to separate sensuality from sexuality
- There are many different body shapes, sizes and physical attributes
- Media portrayals of the human body may present a false ideal of bodily perfection which does not reflect real life and can have negative impact on the individual
- How to take care of their body and the importance of taking increased responsibility for their own personal hygiene
- How to develop self-confidence and self-esteem
- The importance and benefits of delaying sexual intercourse until ready
- There are different emotions which may emerge in relation to change and loss and strategies to manage them
- How to develop the skills needed to identify and resist peer and other types of pressure to conform
- The concepts of sexual identity, gender identity and sexual orientation
- To recognise, clarify and if necessary challenge their values, attitudes and beliefs and to understand how these influence their choices
- Human reproduction, including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems

- About gestation and birth, including the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta, e.g. foetal alcohol syndrome
- About human fertility, methods of managing conception for the purposes of achieving or avoiding pregnancy and the difference between natural and artificial methods
- The menstrual cycle and the function of gametes (sperm and ova), in fertilisation.
- The negative impact of substance use on both male and female fertility

Theme 2: Created to love others

- The nature of sacramental marriage and the importance of marriage as the foundation of society and its role in the domestic Church
- The role of marriage as the basis of family life and its importance to the bringing up of children
- Recognise the spiritual context of the family as a community where members can grow in faith, hope and love
- How to express love and care for others through acts of charity
- How to discuss religious faith and personal beliefs with others
- Recognise the importance of forgiveness in relationships and know something about Jesus' teaching on forgiveness
- Pupils should be taught:
- About discrimination, prejudice and bullying and how to respond, including responsibilities towards those who are experiencing these things (See protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010, Part 2, Chapter 1, sections 4-12)
- The features of positive and stable relationships and the virtues needed to sustain them (e.g. trust, mutual respect, honesty) in a wide variety of contexts, including family, class, friendships, intimate relationships etc.
- That relationships can cause strong feelings and emotions (including sexual attraction) and methods for managing these 3.2.3.4. The nature and importance of friendship as the basis of a loving, sexual relationship.
- That someone else's expectations in a relationship may be different to yours and strategies for negotiating possible differences.
- The nature and importance of marriage; the distinctions between marriage in Church teaching, including sacramental marriage, civil marriage, civil partnerships and other stable, long-term relationships.
- The roles, rights and responsibilities of parents, carers and children in families and that those families can be varied and complex
- Understand that loving, supportive family relationships provide the best environment for a child
- That marriage is a commitment, entered into freely, never forced through threat or coercion.
- Some people will choose to be celibate (unmarried) and to refrain from sexual activity, e.g. single people, priests and those in religious life
There is diversity in sexual attraction and developing sexuality, including sources of support and reassurance and how to access them
- They have autonomy and the right to protect their body from inappropriate and unwanted contact
- To identify the characteristics of unhealthy relationships and where to get help
- Consent is freely given and that being pressurised, manipulated or coerced to agree to something is not 'consent'
- The law in relation to consent, including the legal age of consent for sexual activity, the legal definition of consent and the responsibility in law for the seeker of consent to ensure that consent has been given.

- How to use technology safely, including social media and consideration of their “digital footprint” and the law regarding the sharing of images
- That not all images, language and behaviour are appropriate, including the negative effects of pornography and the dangers of online exploitation
- Recognise the impact that the use of substances has on the ability to make good and healthy decisions
- There are a number of different people and appropriate organisations they can go to for help in different situations and should be provided with information about how to contact them

Theme 3: Created to live in community

- To discuss moral questions in a balanced and well informed way
- Understand the features of the home, school and parish and how each work for the good of all
- The purpose and importance of immunisation and vaccination
- That certain infections can be spread through sexual activity, including HIV, and ways of protecting against sexually transmitted infections, including abstinence
- The physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM); that it is a criminal act and where to get support for themselves or their peers
- They have responsibilities towards their local, global and national community and creation
- There are some cultural practices which are against UK law and Universal Rights (e.g. FGM, forced marriages, honour based violence, human trafficking, radicalisation etc.); to have the skills and strategies to respond to being targeted or witnessing the targeting of others
- That discriminatory language and behaviour is unacceptable (e.g. sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist) and the need to challenge it and how to do so.
- The potential tensions between human rights, English law and cultural and religious expectations and practices

Key Stage 4 (age 14-16 Years 10 – 11)

The Key Stage 4 RSE Curriculum follows the same three main themes. Students will be taught:

Theme 1: Created and Loved by God

- To appreciate sensual pleasure as a gift from God and the difference between sensual and sexual pleasure;
- The concept of fasts and feasts and the importance of self-discipline and moderation
- To recognise that sexuality is a God-given gift and that sexual intercourse is the most intimate expression of human love and should be delayed until marriage, building on learning at KS3
- The Church’s teaching on the morality of natural and artificial methods of managing fertility, building on learning at KS3
- That giving time to prayer and reflection is a way of growing in understanding of themselves and their own character, as well as deepening their relationship with God.
- The methods of informing one’s conscience and the absolute character of conscientious demands
- To evaluate their own personal strengths and areas for development
- How virtues, values, attitudes and beliefs can drive a growing sense of purpose for their lives
- The influences on their body image including the media’s portrayal of idealised and artificial body shapes
- The health risks and issues related to this, including cosmetic procedures
- To take increased responsibility for monitoring their own health (including testicular and breast self-examination)
- The characteristics of emotional and mental health, including stress, anxiety and depression, self-harm and suicide and their potential impact on self and others

- The importance and benefits of delaying sexual intercourse until ready, considering the idea of appropriateness and the importance of marriage
- Strategies for managing mental health and emotional well-being
- How to develop the skills needed to identify and resist peer and other types of pressure to conform
- To recognise, clarify and if necessary challenge their values, attitudes and beliefs and to understand how these influence their choices
- Human reproduction, including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems and the correct terms for the reproductive body parts, both internal and external
- About gestation and birth, including the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta, e.g. foetal alcohol syndrome
- The different stages in the development of an unborn child in the womb from the moment of conception to birth
- About human fertility, building on the learning at KS3; methods of managing conception for the purposes of achieving or avoiding pregnancy and the difference between natural and artificial methods.
- That fertility levels can vary in different people; can be damaged by some sexually transmitted infections and decreases with age
- The negative impact of substance-use on both male and female fertility and those positive lifestyle choices which maximise fertility

Theme 2: Created to love others

- Understand what the Church teaches about marriage, and when it is a Sacrament and the distinction between separation, divorce and nullity
- The role of marriage as the basis of family life and its importance to the bringing up of children, including an understanding of how the Church supports family life
- Know and understand what human and divine attributes, virtues and skills are required to sustain a happy, authentic marriage which is lifelong and life giving
- To recognise their responsibilities towards others, and the human dignity of others in God's eyes
- To be able to discuss faith and personal belief sensitively, demonstrating mutual respect
- To understand the importance of self-giving love and forgiveness in a relationship
- The sanctity of life, and the significance of this concept in debates about abortion
- To evaluate the extent to which their self-confidence and self-esteem are affected by the judgments of others
- The characteristics and benefits of positive, strong, supportive, equal relationships
- To manage changes in personal relationships including the ending of relationships
- About harassment and how to manage this
- To recognise when others are using manipulation, persuasion or coercion and how to respond
- Parenting skills and qualities and their central importance to family life (including the implications of young parenthood)
- The nature and importance of marriage; the difference between sacramental and civil marriage, civil partnerships and other stable, long-term relationships.
- About the impact of domestic and relationship violence (including sources of help and support)
- The impact of separation, divorce and bereavement on individuals and families and the need to adapt to changing circumstances
- About diversity in sexual attraction and developing sexuality, including sources of support and reassurance and how to access them

- An awareness of exploitation, bullying and harassment in relationships (including the unique challenges posed by online bullying and the unacceptability of physical, emotional, sexual abuse in all types of teenage relationships, including in group settings such as gangs) and how to respond
- The concept of consent in relevant, age-appropriate contexts building on Key Stage 3, how to seek consent and to respect others' right to give, not give or withdraw consent
- The risks and consequences of legal and illegal substance use including on their ability to make good decisions in relation to sexual relationships
- To understand the pernicious influence of gender double standards and victim-blaming
- To understand the consequences of unintended pregnancy and of teenage parenthood (in the context of learning about parenting skills and qualities and their importance to family life)
- About abortion, including the current legal position, the risks associated with it, the Church's position and other beliefs and opinions about it
- About statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships experiencing difficulties or in crisis, such as relationship breakdown, separation, divorce, or bereavement
- The importance of the school, the parish and other Catholic voluntary organisations in providing help and advice for young people
- Where and how to obtain sexual health information, advice and support
- About who to talk to for accurate, impartial advice and support in the event of unintended pregnancy

Theme 3: Created to live in community

- To debate moral questions in a way which is well informed, nuanced and sensitive, taking into account the teaching of the Catholic Church in the relevant areas
- The main principles of Catholic Social Teaching and how these relate to our relationship to each other and to creation

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Assessment and Monitoring

The RSHE programme will be monitored by the Curriculum Deputy, the PSHE and Wellbeing Co-ordinator and each Head of Department responsible for the implementation. Students' opinion and evaluations will be sought as to the effectiveness of their studies.

Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for RSHE, teachers will assess understanding and capture progress using a range of formative assessment, for example, short tests, quizzes, written assignments or self-evaluations.

Roles and responsibilities - The Governing Board

The governing board will approve the RSHE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

Roles and responsibilities - The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE 7.3

Roles and responsibilities - Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Attending relevant CPD opportunities
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE

Roles and responsibilities - Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

Visitors and Health Professionals

We welcome the support and professional help of a variety of health professionals and outside speakers with experience of this area. All outside speakers are approved by the Senior Leadership Team. All visiting speakers are made aware of the ethos of the college and will only be invited to speak if they are supportive of it.

Pregnant Teenagers

All pregnant teenagers will be cared for and enabled to attend school throughout their pregnancy until a date advised by a doctor. A base will be made for them in Sanctuary if the student and their parents feel it is appropriate.

Complaints Procedure

A curriculum complaints policy document can be obtained from the school.

Documents that have been consulted:

- A model Catholic Secondary RSE Curriculum (CES)
- Department for Education's statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) 2019.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Equality Act 2010 and schools
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on Cyberbullying
Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC))

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSHE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within Relationships, Sex and Health Education

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	

