



St. Augustine's RC High School

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

Date approved by Governors: October 2023

Review Date: September 2024

“We act justly, love tenderly and recognise God in our lives.”

Faith and Love

At Saint Augustine’s, we want our young people to act justly, love tenderly and recognise God in their lives. Working with families, we will educate children in accordance with the principles and teachings of the Catholic church.

Our faith is nourished through the Eucharist and we want everyone at Saint Augustine’s to experience the joy of the Gospel in their journey through school and beyond.

We will foster in all members of our community a love of God and a love of others as Jesus taught us.

Care and Support

We believe that every person is made and loved by God. This is why we respect each other, value human dignity and consider the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.

We want our pupils to be safe, happy and successful at school. We will provide an environment that inspires, encourages and supports their development through nurturing their gifts and talents and will instil in them the importance of the common good and the stewardship of creation.

Ambition and Success

We aim to provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that they need to be successful at school and in later life.

We will work to fulfil the potential of every member of our school by providing an education that values the whole person and promotes personal and spiritual growth.

Together we will send out our young people to make a difference in our community and in the wider world.

Definition

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) at St Augustine's both informs and draws upon the existing knowledge provided by parents, carers and where appropriate, other schools that our pupils have previously attended. Our RSE is a response to the challenge of our school Mission Statement. It involves growth, support, collaboration and is based upon our belief in the expectation and joy of the Gospel.

In this policy, the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents set out their intentions about RSE at St Augustine's.

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy took place after consultation with staff, parents, pupils and the Governors in the academic year 2022. The policy will be reviewed every two years by the Head teacher, PSHE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and Staff. During this bi-annual review, Parents and pupils will also be invited to consulted to provide their feedback.

Dissemination of Policy

The draft policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the school's web site.

Defining Relationship and Sex Education

This Policy and Curriculum have been updated to comply with statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), "2019 Guidance. Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education", which is compulsory from September 2020.

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 about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of her or him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience."

The DfE identifies three main elements:

- Attitudes and values
- Personal and social skills
- Knowledge and understanding

Statutory curriculum requirements

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. (There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections). However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

Rationale

Jesus said: *“I have come that you might have life and have it to the full”* (John 10:10)

We are involved in RSE because of our Christian beliefs about God and the human person:

- We are made in God’s image, Jesus is “Word made flesh” so all flesh is holy.
- Jesus’s command to love is the basis of all Christian morality.
- Humans are created out of love.
- To be human is to relate – we exist in relationship.
- We must live in “right relationships” with the whole of creation.

All RSE will be in accordance with the Church’s moral teaching. It will emphasise the nature and importance of marriage and the family but will recognise that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage. Following the guidance of the DfE and the Bishops of England and Wales, RSE is firmly embedded in the PSHE framework delivered through Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education lessons.

Aims

Our aim when teaching about these issues is not only to provide age-related appropriate information; more importantly we set out to nurture in our pupils an understanding that positive and caring attitudes and environments are essential for the development of a good self image. We encourage the belief that individuals are in charge of, and responsible for, their own bodies.

We seek to develop in our pupils the understanding, sensitivity, skills and attitudes which allow them to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy way. That is the core learning outcome linked to this programme.

- To help and encourage our pupils to get to know and understand themselves more fully.
- To deepen their awareness and understanding of their relationships with others.
- To give the pupils a positive view of themselves spiritually, emotionally, and physically.
- To give an understanding of the physical development of their own bodies and those of either sex.

- To encourage the pupils to understand sexuality within the context of a loving relationship.

Values

Our RSE programme:

- enshrines Gospel values relating to love, stable relationships, marriage and family life.
- is faithful to the Church's vision of human wholeness whilst recognising the modern world in which we live today.
- provides a positive view of human sexuality and dignity of the human person.
- equips young people with the ability to make practical judgments about the right thing to do in particular circumstances.
- explores and promotes virtues which are essential to promoting respect and dignity.
- is delivered in an age appropriate way which reflects the development of the child.
- has a cross-curricular approach with several subjects including Religious Education, Science and Physical Education.
- is sensitive to the needs of the individual pupil and recognises the mix of pupils with different sexual orientations, genders and family backgrounds in each class.
- is taken seriously by the Governors and teachers as an integrated part of the broad and balanced curriculum that St Augustine's offers.
- is delivered by professionals who understand the Church's teaching.

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.

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;
- how to manage 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;
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

External Visitors / Agencies

On occasion, help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists will be invited to deliver aspects of RSE. These visits will complement and enhance the current RSE programme. External visitors will be made clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Staff are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a Safeguarding issue. If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk, they should immediately follow the school's Safeguarding procedures.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The PSHE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the RSE programme by examining schemes of work, lesson plans and feedback from pupils and staff. Evaluation will take place through questionnaires / response sheets, or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. The results of the evaluation should be reported to the SLT and Governors. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

Our Programme: RSE in Partnership

Programme / Resources

Please see the following appendices for further information:

APPENDIX A (separate document): To see the DfE Parent Guide –Understanding relationships, sex and health education at your child's school: secondary

APPENDIX B (separate document): To see the overview/curriculum map of RSE for St Augustine's The curriculum programme will be form a series of planned lessons within KS3 and KS4.

APPENDIX C (attached): Content required by the Department of Education in the teaching of Relationship, Sex and Health Education.

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Balanced curriculum

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers 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/academies relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). 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. We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

Parents

RSE at St Augustine's recognises that parents are the first and best educators of their children and that the school works in partnership with them. They have the right to be consulted before a RSE programme is embarked upon. Information on the programme will be made available to parents and the right to withdraw their children from the Sex Education is respected, excepting those elements which are required by the National Curriculum for Science. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Headteacher. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning.

Governing Body

Governors have a responsibility for ensuring that there is a RSE policy which is in keeping with Catholic teaching. They will ensure that the policy is available to parents and that parents know of their right to withdraw their children. Governors will ensure that the programme and teaching materials are monitored and evaluated.

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, Parents, Salford Diocese and Lancashire County Council.

PSHE Co-ordinator

Much of the RSE programme is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework within PSHE lessons. The Co-ordinator 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 in-service training. They will be supported by the Senior Leadership Team.

A cross-curricular approach

At St Augustine's RSE is a whole school issue. All teachers have a responsibility of care and should contribute to the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their pupils. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic ethos at St Augustine's. They will teach the RSE curriculum as detailed in the schemes of work for PSHE, RE, Science, Physical Education and through the pastoral programme. They will be consulted and participate in monitoring and evaluating SRE.

Teaching strategies

Teachers will establish clear ground rules to create a safe environment. For example, no one will have to answer a personal question or no one will be forced to take part in a discussion etc. Teachers will use distancing techniques such as depersonalising discussions to avoid embarrassment and protect privacy. Teachers will establish clear parameters for dealing with questions. If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules. If a question is too explicit or inappropriate for the age range of the class, the teacher should acknowledge it and attend to it later on an individual basis.

Appropriate adjustments will be made where necessary for pupils with SEND in liaison with the SENDCO and in line with their pupil passport/EHCP.

Reflection points are crucial for learning as they encourage pupils to consolidate what they have learned and to form new understanding, skills and attitudes. PSHE units of work end with a lesson of reflection and evaluation.