



*In God's love we believe and achieve*



# St. Michael's

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## Catholic Primary School

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**Relationship, Sex and Health Education**

# St. Michael's Catholic Primary School Relationship and Sex Education Policy

*"I have come that you might have life and have it to the full"*

*(John:10:10)*

## Mission Statement

**'In God's Love we believe and achieve.'**

As a welcoming Catholic community we will:

- Follow in the footsteps of Jesus
- Deliver the best possible education for all of our children
- Value and love each other in our school and our community
- Provide an inclusive environment where everyone reaches their full potential

### Rationale

The DFE guidance defines Relationship and Sex Education (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 also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health". It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of her/him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in loving 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, and knowledge and understanding".

Relationship and Sex Education in St Michael's Catholic Primary School is about relating to other people and respecting the rights and feelings of others. It is also about protecting oneself from abuse and exploitation. It prepares young people to cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up. It imparts knowledge, develops personal skills and challenges attitudes allowing young people to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner.

In St. Michael's, RSHE is embedded within the Science and Religious Education curriculum and a Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) programme.

The directive from the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales, states that it is our Christian understanding of the process of education, which demands that issues of sex education, appropriate to the developmental needs of young people, are addressed in school. The Bishops issued a statement, which said:

'In a society which so often focuses on the superficial and trivial, the value and essential goodness of the sexual relationship and, indeed, its sacredness, will be seriously undermined unless young people are helped to form a true understanding of their meaning.'

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 St. Michael's. 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 values.

At the heart of the Christian life is the belief that we live in communion, united in loving relationships 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, is placed firmly within the context of relationships, as it is through them, that sexuality grows and develops.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales, and as advocated by the DFE, Relationships and Sex Education is firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and is integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive ensuring that all individuals are respected, understood and appreciated.

The Governing Body of St. Michael's Catholic School has considered the Education Act and the Bishops' statements and the Policy Guidance for Delivering quality RSE and confirm that all RSE taught in St Michael's 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 irrespective of their personal family situation. Support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

### **Aims**

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that Relationship and Sex Education is an integral part of this education.

In St. Michael's we aim to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes to all relationships setting it firmly within our distinctively Christian vision of education. As we strive to understand, appreciate and respect individuals we aim:

- To present a positive, person centred education which is about the growth, development and journey of the whole person towards becoming 'fully human, fully alive' as a unique creation made in God's image (Education in Sexuality. CES).
- To develop a positive attitude to themselves, their feelings and their sexuality.
  - To understand that self-giving love is central to relationships.
  - To recognise the importance of forgiveness and saying sorry in relationships.
- To create a secure, safe and reflective environment where pupils and staff are at ease with one another and that they recognise their changing emotions and are able to express their feelings positively.
  - To ensure that every individual feels valued and is able to value and support others with self-confidence.
- To present role models of good relationships and promote the values, attitudes and behaviours that underpin healthy, loving relationships.
- To prepare the children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

- To present a broad, planned Relationship and Sex Education programme based on the recommended Programme: "Journey in Love".
- To promote the protection of children by emphasising 'Keeping Safe' messages and strategies appropriate to the children's age and stage of development.
- To work in partnership with the home, parishes, health professionals, caring professionals and groups, both statutory and voluntary, who are involved in working to keep children safe and healthy.
- To develop good relationships where pupils respect differences in the context of love. This includes an understanding of LGBT relationships.

In Christ, all of creation is reconciled to God who draws people into unity and heals the divided self. This is the ultimate aim of RSE in St. Michael's School, which is based on the reconciling mission of Christ.

### **Objectives**

The school approaches the needs of each pupil and endeavours to live the Gospel, in the way it influences everything done in the classroom and throughout the school. It provides opportunities:

- to appreciate that life is a gift from God;
- to explore the meaning and value of life, and give some appreciation of the values of a family life;
- to understand what is meant by relationships within families, friends and communities;
- to have an understanding of a family as a spiritual community in which members can grow in faith, hope and love;
- to understand the Church's teaching on loving relationships and marriage;
- to understand the Church's teaching on the distinction between sexual orientation and sexual activity;
- to recognise and appreciate the Catholic belief in the importance of marriage for family life and the bringing up of children;

- to help the children understand that there are different types of relationships and develop skills to be effective in relationships;
- to enable the children to have some understanding that love is central and the basis of meaningful relationships;
- to encourage pupils to be aware of their attitudes and values and have a sense of responsibility for themselves;
- to help the children to understand that their actions affect themselves and others, to care about other people's feelings and to try and see things from their point of view;
- to enable children to talk and write about their opinions and explain their views on issues that affect themselves and society;
- to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events;
- to reflect on moral, spiritual, social and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences;
- to enable pupils to understand the impact of external factors, such as the media, the Internet, peer groups and in so doing remain independent decision makers;
- to explore and respond appropriately to prejudice and gender stereotyping;
- to enable pupils to recognise the importance of the choices they make and that they are responsible for themselves;
- to value themselves as a child of God and their body as God's gift to them;
- to enable pupils to understand and be aware of personal, psychological, emotional and physical changes that happen during puberty, why they happen and how to manage them;
- to understand their own bodies and the need for personal hygiene;
- to know and understand that the life processes common to humans include growth and reproduction;

- to generate an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality where questions of a sexual nature, appropriate to the stage of learning, can be asked and answered openly without embarrassment;
- to understand and be able to name external body parts;
- to understand and name internal body parts and realise the difference between boys and girls;
- to know that menstruation is a fact about growing up;
- to know the basic biology of human reproduction and understand the growth of a baby in the womb;
- to take care of themselves, their health, safety and personal hygiene;
- to know that some diseases are infectious;
- to keep themselves safe and ask for help and support when needed;
- to think positively about their own body.

St Michael's programme for RSE will explore the child's own experience, helping each child to explore, reflect, respect, relate, remember, rejoice and renew at each stage of learning. This is at the heart of the mission of the school and underpins the ethos.

### **Values and Virtues**

Our programme, based on "Journey in Love", embraces Catholic values and relates to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to God's call to love others with a proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body. The following virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

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. 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.

### **The Role and Responsibility of Parents**

The staff and Governors of St. Michael's Catholic Primary School believe that the prime responsibility for the general education of young people with regard to RSE rests with person(s) with parental responsibility. Parents are the key people in teaching their children about relationships, sex and growing up. They do this by:

- Teaching their children about relationships and sex.
- Maintaining the culture and ethos of the family.
- Helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up.
- Preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sex and maturity brings.

*DfE Sex and Relationship Education guidance 2000*

The staff at St Michael's believe that the educational task is supporting parents/carers in this responsibility and seeking the fullest possible development of the young people entrusted to the school. The school Policy is to consult parents at each stage of the planned educational provision. The Policy is to ensure that the shared values of school and home form the basis of the approach.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education; however parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from RSE except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science programmes of study or Relationships Education. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Headteacher. The school will support parents/carers by providing material for them to help the children with



their learning. We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

### **A 'Person' Centred Approach**

In formulating the Policy, and in offering any further guidance regarding programmes designed to implement the Policy, the staff believe that all matters relating to RSE are to be taught within a positive, proactive and 'person centred' approach which has regard for moral considerations and the value of family life. Within such an approach, the values of the Catholic Christian tradition are regarded in order to promote the most complete formation possible for the young people at the school.

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 St. Michael's Catholic Primary School.

*'The inclusion of a positive person-centred education is at the heart of Catholic Christian Education. This education is about the growth, development and journey of the whole person towards becoming fully human, fully alive as a unique creation in God's image.'*

*(Education in Sexuality, CES)*

### **An Approach Which is Developmental in Character**

After consultation with parents and other appropriate stakeholders, the programme is developmental by nature and, in the professional judgement of the staff, suited to all pupils according to their needs and social contexts.

The Policy is to ensure that all children are protected from ignorance and that they are given all necessary information and correct answers, thus assisting towards Christian maturity. Following specific guidance, at St Michael's Catholic Primary School, children are given opportunities to develop a:

*'properly formed conscience which enables them to make right judgements and take right actions into the many varied situations in which they find themselves.'*

### **The Specific Content**

The specific content of the RSE programme has been discussed with parents/carers. They were satisfied that their children's physical and emotional needs, at each stage of their development in school, were being addressed.

It was agreed with parents/carers that staff would not deviate from the programme. Thus, if a subject/question is raised that is not agreed in the syllabus, staff will consult the parent/carer of the children and they will be able to deal with the child's enquiry at their own discretion, (obviously, the staff offer parent/carer support, if needed).

### **The Organisation Of Relationship And Sex Education**

Designated staff are responsible for RSE. They:

- lead by example and offer advice and help where necessary;
- co-ordinate the development of relationship and sex education;
- attend relevant in-service training.

RSE in St. Michael's is delivered through SCARF which has been adopted as a PSHE programme of study. The topics for each year group have been planned in conjunction with the science National Curriculum and the Liverpool Archdiocesan COME AND SEE and Journey in Love Programmes. RSE will not be taught as a separate subject but with health education and the subject areas mentioned above.

The basic content of the Sex Education Programme, agreed by staff, parents and Governors is as follows:

### **EYFS**

- Why I am special to my family?
- How do you know that I am special?
- What do I love and enjoy about belonging to my family?
- Who would I go to if I felt worried or needed help?

- How does God show love to me and my family?

### **AIM**

Children will begin to explore the wonder of being special and unique. They will begin to know and understand that they are part of the wonder of God's love and creation.

### **Year 1**

- How is love shown in my family?
- Who can I talk to if I need help?
- Why are the words 'please', 'thank you' and 'sorry' important to create a happy family?
- Why is teasing and bullying wrong and unacceptable within families and friendships?
- Why should we always tell the truth?

### **AIM**

Children will focus on families and specially growing up in a loving, secure and stable home. They will know and understand the PANTS rule.

### **Year 2**

- How would I describe a community?
- Who are the safe people who can help me if something feels wrong?
- What are the joys of belonging to a community?
- How do different individuals enrich a community?
- What do I bring to the community that I belong to?

### **AIMS**

Children will begin to describe how we are growing and developing in diverse communities that are God-given.

### **Year 3**

- How do friendships make us feel happy and secure?
- How can friendships change?
- Why is violence never the answer?
- What Bible stories teach us about the beauty of forgiveness?
- How can I be assertive if someone has entered my personal space?

### **Aim**

Children will describe and give reasons for how we grow in love in caring and happy friends where we are secure and safe.

### **Year 4**

- In what ways is being polite and courteous helping to make a better world to live in?
- How do authority figures help communities and societies work together better?
- How do we respect others even when they are different from ourselves?
- How can your gifts be used for the common good?
- What could I do if someone was upsetting me?

### **Aim**

Children will begin to make links and connections to show that we are all different. To celebrate these differences as we appreciate that God's love accepts us as we are now and as we change. Everyone has the same basic body plan.

### **Year 5**

- How have I grown and changed?
- How do I feel emotionally?
- Have I changed physically? Am I stronger? Have I grown?

- Learn about puberty as time of change for both boys and girls and learn facts about menstruation.
- How will I grow and change over the next twelve months?

### **Aim**

Children will begin to show knowledge and understanding of how we grow in awareness of the physical and emotional changes that accompany puberty and grow further in recognising God's presence in our daily lives.

### **Year 6**

- How am I becoming more mature? (responsibility - other ways?)
- Revise menstruation
- Explain how human life is conceived
- Recognise Male and female reproductive organs. Explain how human life is conceived.
- Understand the importance of loving relationships
- Understand that sex is a gift from God and something to celebrate.
- Learn how a baby is formed, by understanding the basic facts about sexual intercourse.
- Understand how a baby develops in the womb.

### **Aim**

Children will begin to develop a secure understanding of what stable, caring relationships are and the different kinds there may be. Focusing on Catholic teaching, children will also know and understand that men and women have the ability to create a new life.

### **Children's Questions**

The governors, Headteacher and teachers want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. They want to ensure that pupils can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be

sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people.

### **Controversial Or Sensitive Issues**

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. (See also Sex and Relationship Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000, Department for Education and Employment, July 2000 for more detail)

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child or young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

### **Supporting Children And Young People Who Are At Risk**

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their pupils and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a child or young person is a victim of or is at risk of abuse they are required to follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

### **Confidentiality, Advice And Disclosure**

All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, will have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human. Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the

programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstance they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

The teachers at St. Michael's are clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. Teachers are aware that effective RSE can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. Staff are clear about confidentiality and disclosure and should never promise confidentiality regarding a disclosure about sexual activity by a pupil as it may become a child protection issue. There is a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and designated members of staff to deal with issues of disclosure and procedures are in place for dealing with situations in a sensitive way.

### **Assessment, Recording And Reporting**

In accordance with the Catholic School belief in upholding the dignity and value of each individual, any method used to assess the performance of pupils must respect the individual's worth. Assessment is central to the personal and social development of the individual and in St. Michael's will be fulfilled through the monitoring of the understanding and development of the children and also through self-assessment opportunities. This will be used to inform future planning. At the end of each year teachers will comment on the development of each child in terms of personal growth and relationships.

### **Equal Opportunities**

'Sex and Relationship Education is for all children and young people in school. The needs of all pupils should be considered'

DfES Sex and Relationship Education Guidance

RSE is for all children in St. Michael's Catholic Primary School. All young people have a right to RSE, which supports the fulfilment of their responsibility to make well-informed decisions about sexual activity and relationships. RSE is taught on a class basis and boys and girls are treated with equal respect. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of

discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours, including cyber-bullying. Care is taken to ensure that all material used in the delivery of RSE addresses issues of sex, sexual orientation, gender, Special Educational Needs and Disability, learning difficulties and ethnicity.

### **Inclusion And Differentiated Learning**

We 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, faith or culture and 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.

### **Continuity And Progression**

The content and delivery of RSE is structured so that there is cohesion and progression. The content of what the children learn in PSHE is built into appropriate National Curriculum topics in Science and into the COME AND SEE topics in Religious Education. This ensures both continuity and progression.

### **Cross Curricular Issues**

Issues involved in the delivery of RSE permeates the life and work of the whole school. As mentioned, however, this has a particular place in the study of Science, PSHE and Religious Education.

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this Policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents/carers, the Diocesan Schools' Service and the Local Education Authority, also appropriate agencies.

### **Conclusion**

RSE in St. Michael's Catholic Primary School teaches the children that life is a precious gift from God and that as children of God we celebrate all aspects of life and learning. The programme of learning ensures continuity and progression and supports children on their life journey so that at every stage all children will:



*'live life, life in all its fullness'*

*(John: 10:10)*

**Policy Review**

The Relationship and Sex Education Policy will be reviewed every 2 years or earlier in the light of guidance, training, changes in legislation or at the request of a member of the School Community. Any amendments will be agreed by the staff and the Governing Body.

Reviewed by Mike Volynchok on behalf of the Governing body October 2023

Signed Copy available from the school office.