



Saint Edmund's Catholic Primary School

'Together we learn and grow through worship and celebration'

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Committee responsible for policy	Community
Approved by Committee/ FGB	February 2018
Statutory/Non-statutory	STATUTORY
Frequency of Review	FREE to determine - 3 YEARS
Date of last review	June 2014
Date of next review	January 2021
Purpose of policy	To fulfil the Governing Body's role to ensure that Relationships and sex education is taught in the context of marriage and family life and the teachings of the Catholic Church.
Consultation	Government documentation and guidance Bishops Conference
Links to other policies	Equalities, Behaviour RE and related policies

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Relationships and Sex Education

1 Introduction

We have based our school's sex education policy on the DfEE guidance document Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (ref DfEE 0116/2000). In this document, sex education is defined as *'learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.'*

The vision of education promoted and pursued by the Catholic community has always emphasised the aim of educating the whole person. It is precisely because of Christian beliefs about God and about the human person that Catholic schools need to support pupils in their progress towards Christian maturity and the subsequent responsibilities that this entails.

The importance of education in sexuality has been recognised by the Bishops of England and Wales in a number of documents, making recommendations with regard to how schools might approach this subject in a sensitive, mature and informative way. As a school we have an important role to play in the formation of children's attitudes, encouraging a positive and confident view with regard to themselves and their relationships with others. It represents being part of a journey of understanding, in partnership with parents and parish, its goal the growth and well-being of our children. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

'Catholic faith has a distinctive understanding of the human person, of true relationships and the nature of community. This understanding should be reflected in the way a Catholic school forms its policy and enables young people to grow, sharing the experience of belonging to a community with Gospel values.'
Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1994

2 Aims and objectives

The inclusion of positive, person-centred education is at the heart of Catholic education. This education is about the development, growth and journey of the whole person towards becoming 'fully human, fully alive' as a unique creation made in God's image. Education in sexuality is of paramount importance in our Catholic schools today. Children in our care need help and guidance in their struggle to live out their

lives as members of the Christian family. Sex and relationship education is taught in the context of marriage and family life and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

We teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- respect for their own bodies and others
- the importance of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship;
- the importance of family life;
- moral questions;
- relationship issues;
- respect for the views of other people;
- reproduction within science curriculum

3 Curriculum

We teach sex and relationship education through different aspects of the curriculum: science, PSHE, PE and R.E. We teach within a subject context and draw out any aspects that we feel will contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

We teach children about life cycles, changes in puberty and relationships.

In Y4 we have a shared mother/daughter session to start the conversation about menstruation – this is for those who feel their daughters are ready to have that conversation.

In Y5 we re-visit this topic with the girl's prior to their residential trip. We also discuss with both boys and girls topics on cleanliness, early changes in puberty and the need for good hygiene.

In Y6 we place a particular emphasis on changes the children will experience as they enter puberty. We liaise with the School Nurse about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. A copy of the materials we use can be requested from the school office so that parents can see them beforehand.

Parents are notified prior to the teaching sessions so they can make informed decisions.

Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

4 The role of parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the

parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents about the school's sex and relationship policy by placing this on the website
- answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for sex and relationship education in the school;
- involve parents in reviewing the school policy by asking for feedback at key times of involvement in the programme and by making modifications as necessary;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to sex and relationship education, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.
- We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex and relationships programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

5 Child Protection/Confidentiality

Teachers conduct lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection.

Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse – the teacher will report/inform the Head teacher/Child Protection Officer as soon as is practicable. The Head teacher/Child Protection Officer will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals. (See also Child Protection Policy.)

6 The role of the headteacher

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex and relationship policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the head teacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The head teacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school sex and relationship programme, and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework.

The head teacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

7 Equal Opportunities

We ensure that teaching and learning:

- offers accessibility to all pupils
- emphasises the dual responsibilities to persons of both sexes in human relationships
- includes an awareness of disability and of our multi-cultural environment
- offers a differentiated programme for children identified with special educational needs, as appropriate.

8 Monitoring and Review

The Community Committee of the governing body monitors the sex and relationship policy every third year unless relevant changes occur. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body. The Committee gives serious consideration and review to any comments from parents about the programme.