

ST. ANNE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

(Statutory)

Autumn 2024

Next Review: Autumn 2026

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Mission Statement

St. Anne's Catholic High School for Girls will offer a positive presence in Enfield with a comprehensive curriculum equipping students with the ability to meet the challenges of the 21st Century confidently and with high spiritual and moral standards.

We recognise that students, parents, staff and governors make up the school's community which will continually self-evaluate to improve itself effectively and efficiently in all aspects of its growth.

'Act justly, love tenderly, walk humbly with your God.'

AIMS

At the core of our School's Mission Statement is a firm aim to equip our students to become confident in meeting the challenges in life, both morally and spiritually. Within this lies the value of teaching Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) to a high standard. Teaching RSE prepares our students for puberty and gives them an understanding of sexual development as well as knowing the importance of health and hygiene.

It supports students in developing feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy, while learning to set boundaries, value and understand consent.

RSE is very much about creating a positive culture around matters of sexuality and relationships, whilst equipping the students with vocabulary to describe themselves, their feelings and their bodies. Throughout the teaching of RSE our Catholic ethos is evident, providing support in the students' moral and spiritual development.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY

This policy has been developed with the consultation of Senior Leaders, staff, parents and carers, governors and students as well as guidance from the Catholic Education Service.

Parents, staff, students, and governors have been consulted for example through questionnaires, drop-in meetings and focus group made up of student leaders.

Implementation and Review of Policy

The RSE programme has been rolled out in autumn 2021. It will be reviewed every two years by the Headteacher and the RSE Co-ordinator and approved by the Governing Body.

Dissemination

The policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. The policy as well as details of the RSE curriculum will be published on the school's website.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

The DfE guidance states that ***“children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way”***¹.

¹ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, Headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 4

It is about the development of the student's knowledge and their understanding of themselves 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.

In Secondary schools RSE should ***"give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure)."***²

RSE focuses on the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information whilst exploring issues and values. RSE under no circumstance is about the promotion of sexual activity.

At the heart of the Catholic life is the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit in communion, united in a loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation.

As a consequence of the Catholic 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.

RSE teaching is centered on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

As a maintained secondary school we must provide RSE to all students as per the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to the [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#) as well as the [Equality Act 2010](#) including the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#).

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of [National Curriculum Science](#) such as HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.

² Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, Headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 25

CURRICULUM

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with the Church's teaching, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues, ensuring that students are in a position to make safe and informed decisions both now and in the future.

Students 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 students have access to the learning they need to stay safe and healthy whilst understand their rights as individuals.

Our curriculum is set out as per our curriculum map [Year 7](#), [8](#), [9](#), [10](#), [11](#). This may be adapted as other resources come on stream.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with stakeholders taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner ensuring that they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

DELIVERY OF THE RSE PROGRAMME

RSE is an integrated programme and is delivered mainly through PSHE and Religious Education Lesson, as well as targeted lessons in Science, PE, English and IT. Over the academic year our students will receive around 20 lessons of RSE/PSHE integrated in lessons, assemblies or via drop down session. It is important for our students that they are taught RSE through a variety of channels and not as a standalone subject area. Some aspects of the RSE programme are well placed to be delivered via RE with trained RE teachers in order to facilitate an in-depth moral and spiritual conversations and discussion to take place. Likewise, other aspects of the curriculum may be taught in for example English alongside a novel that addresses some of the content from RSE Programme. At times the pastoral team such as form tutors will deliver the RSE lessons when it is considered appropriate. Equally, parts of the RSE programme can be delivered by the pastoral team during assemblies.

The RSE programme is taught using a number of different teaching strategies ensuring that students have a positive and safe experience, for example, establishing ground rules, discussion, reflection, film & video, group work.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop an excellent understanding of what healthy, nurturing relationships look like, within:

- o Families
- o Respectful relationships, including friendships
- o Online and media (this is delivered in collaboration with Online Safety Lead)
- o Being safe
- o Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see the curriculum map [Year 7, 8, 9, 10, 11](#).

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, LGBTQ+ 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).

The expectations to the behaviour are in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy and our students will meet the same expectations in RSE as they do in other lessons. However, as RSE lessons at times can include sensitive topics, each RSE lesson will have the same start and finish to remind our students of our expectations during RSE (Appendix 1).

Given some of the topics in the RSE programme, staff are reminded prior to the RSE lessons of our Anti-bullying Policy and to be mindful of potential bullying or comments made by students. In addition, staff are also asked to be observant for any signs in our students that could trigger a safeguarding concern. Should that happen, staff are asked to follow the Safeguarding Policy and report it on MyConcern (Appendix 1).

ACCESSIBILITY

The RSE programme is designed to meet the needs of our school community. This most definitely includes our SEND students. Prior to the delivery of an RSE lesson, the SEND department will be informed in order for them to make the best arrangements for our SEND students so they feel supported and prepared for the lesson. This includes making sure the staff delivering the lesson is aware of students' needs.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing board will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes towards the RSE Programme
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE, however we as a school aim to make sure staff do not teach a topic they are not comfortable teaching. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher and RSE Lead.

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

The RSE/CPSHE lead work closely with their Line Manager, the Headteacher and the RE department ensuring the curriculum is met and taught in an appropriate manner.

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

The Governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which the RSE Programme can take place. They want to ensure that students 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.

PARENTS AND CARERS

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. Parents/carers will be informed by letter once a term with the topics being covered in RSE. An additional letter will be sent when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning either before or after the lesson.

Parents continue to have **the right to withdraw** their children from the non-statutory Sex Education element of RSE up to and until 3 terms before their child turns 16. After that point, if their child wished to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn the school will arrange this. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning.

Students cannot be withdrawn from the Health Education elements in RSE.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. Please refer to the DfE guidance Page 17 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

EXTERNAL VISITORS

Our school will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice which can be found in the Safeguarding policy.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The RSE/CPSHE Co-ordinator with support from their line manager, the Headteacher and RE lead, will monitor the provision of RSE, update schemes of learning to ensure it meets legal, government and diocesan requirements as well as the needs for our school community. Monitoring and evaluation of the RSE programme will include feedback from students, staff and parents through learning walks, student voice and surveys. The RSE lead reports back to SLT once a year with their findings from a monitoring and evaluation exercise.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- School's Capability Policy and Procedure
- Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Modification history

Version	Date	Description	Revision Author
V1	September 2022	New policy written	C. Sehested
V2	September 2024	Wording reviewed on page 5 and 6	E Danneau-Joyce. Please note that we are expecting a new DfE guidance in 2025.

For students:




This is a SAFE room

- **S**ensitive (Be aware of others and how topics may impact them)
- **A**ccepted (Hear each other, listen to others opinions)
- **F**or our ears only (What is shared in this room is to stay in this room)
- **E**nthusiastic (Engage in the lesson, share your thoughts)

For staff:




Creating a SAFE room

- **S**ensitive (Be aware of the students in the room, they may have experience of this topic)
- **A**re you ok? (Is a student acting differently? Take some time to check in with them, let them feel seen)
- **F**ollow up (Was anything asked today that you could not answer? Pass it on or find out the answer to get back to the student. Was there some comments today that let you uncertain , do you need to follow this up with the AL or my concern?)
- **E**nthusiastic (Add your own spin on the lesson, share stories where appropriate, create the engagement in the lesson)