
OUR LADY IMMACULATE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction:

At Our Lady Immaculate we believe that Relationship and Sex Education needs to be a highly personalised area of the curriculum. We encourage parents and carers to discuss education for personal relationships with their child when they feel it is appropriate.

Through the teachings of our Catholic faith we believe that each person is special and unique in the eyes of God and it should be so in our eyes also. Every member of staff in Our Lady Immaculate is committed therefore to developing and fostering a positive self-image in every child from the day they enter. We value the rich diversity of ethnic backgrounds, cultures and experiences which our children and their families bring to our school and will endeavour to reflect these wherever possible.

Church teaching:

On all questions relating to faith and morals, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is normative. The following is a brief summary from the *Catechism*:

“God created man and woman in his own image, with equal dignity, different yet complementary. Our sexuality is a gift from God, and must be expressed according to his will of love. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and we are one body with Christ. Chastity should be presented in a positive way: it is a gift from God, leading to a self-control which frees us to behave towards ourselves and others with love and with justice. God’s holy gift of sexual intercourse is reserved for the permanent commitment of marriage, expressive of the bond of mutual love and open to God’s gift of new life.” (para 2331-2400, 2514-2533.) “Genuine love is the fundamental vocation of every human being.” (para 2392.)

The document from the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educational Guidance in Human Love* states:

“Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being, of manifestation, of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love. Therefore it is an integral part of the development of the personality and of the educative process.” “Sex education is not reducible to simple teaching material, nor theoretical knowledge alone, nor does it consist of a programme to be carried out progressively, but it has a specific object in view: an effective maturation of pupils’ self-control and of correct behaviour in special relationships.” (SCCE, 1983.)

This document identifies the primary duty of parents to educate their children in matters of human love and the auxiliary but essential duty of the school to co-operate and provide what is best done in the school context.

Further clarification of the subsidiarity of schools to the primary rights and duties of parents is outlined in the document produced by the Pontifical Council for the Family (1995), *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*. This document is highly recommended to parents since it is they who are the prime educators of their children. The document emphasises Gospel values and draws on the insights of science taking into account contemporary social and cultural conditions of family life. It indicates how negative and selfish values concerning human sexuality can be effectively overcome when parents and schools co-operate to foster a genuine appreciation of the values of chastity, self-control and authentic human love which always puts the needs of others before self.

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales publication, *Cherishing Life*, gives a Catholic perspective on fundamental issues relating to the moral and spiritual well-being of the human person in society, especially with reference to the value and protection of human life. It contains a section on the Church's teaching on sexuality.

What is Relationships Education?

This policy has been written with due regard to the Statutory Guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (published 2019.) It states that, "The focus in Primary School is on teaching the characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family friendships, and relationships with other children." There is no legal requirement to teach sex education in Primary School. However, the guidance states that children must learn about "the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals." Furthermore, "It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively."

The following policy has taken account of the guidance and has been developed with the needs of the pupils and their families at the forefront. Aims: Relationships Education (RSE) enables children to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to make informed decisions and be safe, confident, healthy and happy in the modern world and be well-prepared for their rights and responsibilities as citizens in a diverse, multicultural society. Wherever possible, we integrate this learning throughout the curriculum (particularly through Religious Education and science lessons.)

Our programme (Journey in Love) enshrines Catholic values relating 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.

When and how is RSE taught?

As it is now part of the statutory Primary Curriculum, Relationships Education will now be part of the weekly lesson schedule in every class. The journey in love scheme is taught alongside our 'My life' PSHE scheme of work, circle time and collective worship. The lessons may be taught as discrete RSE lessons or delivered through RE or science lessons (depending on the content- see Scheme of Work for more detail.) For the most part, the content will be delivered by the class teacher. However, it may sometimes be relevant or necessary to ask external agencies to deliver some aspects of the curriculum. For example, the NSPCC 'Speak out. Stay safe' assembly or the Police Liaison Officer delivering assemblies on 'Stranger Danger' and 'Personal Safety'. With any visiting agencies, we will always ensure that the content is discussed prior to the event in order to ascertain its relevance and suitability for the children in our school.

Objectives:

By the end of primary school, all pupils should know:

Families and people who care for me:

- That families are important because they can give love, security and stability;
- The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, protection and care of other family members and the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives;
 - That others' families sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences;
- That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of happy families and are important for children's security;
- That marriage represents a legal commitment between two people and is intended to be lifelong; • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek advice or help from others. Caring Friendships:
- How important friendships are and how people choose to make friends;
- The characteristics of friendships (including respect, truthfulness, loyalty, kindness, generosity);
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others;
- That most friendships have ups and downs and these can be worked through and that resorting to violence is never right;
- How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust and how to seek help and advice from others. Respectful Relationships:
- The importance of respecting others, even when they are different from them (physically, in characters, background, preferences or beliefs);
 - Practical steps they can take to improve or support respectful relationships;

- The conventions of courtesy and manners;
- The importance of self-respect and how this links to happiness;
- That in school and society they can be expect to be treated with respect by others and should show respect to others;
- About different types of bullying (including cyber-bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders and how to get help;
- What a stereotype is and how these can be unfair, negative or destructive;
- The importance of permission-seeking giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online Relationships:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone they are not;
- That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face ones;
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them;
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information;
- How information and data is used and shared online. Being Safe:
- What sort of boundaries are appropriate in friendships and with peers;
- About the concept of privacy and the implications (including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe);
 - That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate/unsafe physical contact;
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter who they may not know;
 - How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult;
- How to ask for advice or help and to keep trying until they are heard;
- How to report concerns of abuse (and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so);
- Where to get advice (family, school or other sources.)

Confidentiality

At times, in such an environment, children may share information of a personal nature. Staff working with pupils cannot offer unconditional or absolute confidentiality and have a duty to pass on information to the Designated Child Protection Officer if

what is disclosed indicates that a pupil is at risk of harm. Pupils are reminded during lessons that if they divulge anything that indicates that they may be at risk from harm, then this information has to be passed on.

Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from any aspect of the RSE teaching which is not statutory under the RSE or science curriculum. The request is made to the Headteacher and the parents/carers will then be invited for a meeting to discuss the content of proposed curriculum and if necessary, alternative provision.

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion:

Children with Special Educational Needs are identified by the class teacher (in collaboration with the SENDCo). Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised by the class teacher will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. All staff should be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

Teachers should be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example, those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities.

Teachers should always ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

Monitoring and Recording:

The RSE subject leader will monitor the teaching and learning across the school.

The monitoring will take the form of:

- Planning scrutiny;
- Learning walks; Book scrutinises
- Team teaching;
- Pupil interviews and questionnaires;
- Parent questionnaires and meetings.

Dissemination of the policy:

All staff members receive a copy of this policy. Several copies are available for loan from the school admin office on request. A short summary of this policy will be included in the school prospectus.

Evaluation and review:

Evaluations of plans will be done after each topic and amended where needed. The policy will be reviewed every three years using a consultative process which identifies teacher, pupil and parent feedback on the sex and relationships education programme.