

Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic School

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Section 1 - Introduction

1.1 Legal Requirement

All schools must provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, a PSHE curriculum:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

An amendment to the Children and Social Work Act 2017 made **Relationships and Health Education** at primary; and Relationships, Sex, and Health Education at secondary, statutory subjects. The DfE guidance on Relationships, Health and Sex Education can viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.

1.2 RSE at Our Lady of the Wayside – Our Rationale

‘I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL’

(Jn.10.10)

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 a Catholic school. 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 ideals.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and 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 relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

Our RSE teaching is firmly embedded into a programme of study concerned with nurturing human wholeness through the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of our pupils. RSE at Our Lady of the Wayside School is centred on Christ’s vision of being human, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated. All RSE teaching will be in accordance with the Church’s moral teaching. Our RSE programme 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 the 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

While our RSE programme will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family our RSE programme acknowledges that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

Section 2 Our RSE Programme Intent

Our RSE programme will always have the best interests of our pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships, 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.

2.1 Attitudes and Virtues

To develop the following attitudes and virtues:

- 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.

2.2 Personal and Social Skills

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;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

2:3 Knowledge

To know and understand:

- the Church's teaching on relationships;
- 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;

Section 3 Pedagogical Principles which underpin our RSE Programme

3.1 Progressive & Developmental

The learning will be appropriate to the pupil's age and stage of development, it will be continuous and developmental. It will be a process which is planned from beginning to end with one phase of education informing the work of the next so that children can be led to a deeper and fuller understanding at a rate which corresponds to their maturing.

3.2 Differentiated

We will ensure that our RSE programme is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and is taught in a way that allows access to those pupils at different stages of cognitive and emotional development. Learning and teaching methods will be adapted and specialist resources and training will be provided for those pupils with particular needs. Children with special educational needs and disabilities will not be withdrawn from RSE because of a lack of resources and training or to catch up in other subjects.

3.3 Cross-curricular

Since a Catholic school is committed to the education of the whole person, teaching of RSE is reflected in each relevant part of our curriculum. Whilst, for example, some aspects of RSE will be more appropriately explored in science lessons and some more appropriately explored in RE lessons, each is informed by the other. Each discipline speaks with consistency about the meaning of human love and the virtues that are enshrined in the Church's teaching on human love.

3.4 Integrated

In addition, in ensuring that there is correspondence between phases and across disciplines, we will also ensure that parents are fully involved in the planning and evaluation of the teaching of RSE. Our desire is for pupils to hear a consistent message. This can only be achieved if home and school work to integrate the teaching of RSE.

3.5 Co-ordinated

None of these educational goals are possible if we do not give RSE the time and importance it deserves. RSE is fundamental to our work as a Catholic school and all staff and governors are committed in ensuring RSE is taught well and the programme make a difference to the lives of our pupils.

3.6 Balanced

Whilst promoting Catholic virtues, we also ensure we have a broad and balanced RSE programme. We believe that in order to embrace the challenges of creating a fulfilled and successful adult life, children need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. The teaching of RSE at Our Lady of the Wayside support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

Section 4 RSE Curriculum/Programme

4.1 The structure of our Curriculum

At OLW School we will be following the 'Life to the Full' programme. This programme follows a four-stage structure which is repeated across three different learning stages:

- EYFS Stage is aimed at Nursery and Reception
- Key Stage 1 is aimed at Years 1 and 2
- Lower Key Stage 2 is aimed at Years 3 and 4
- Upper Key Stage 2 is aimed at Years 5 and 6

Within each learning stage, there are three modules which are based on the Model Catholic RSE Curriculum. The three modules are:

1. Created and loved by God (this explores the individual)

The Christian imperative to love self, made in the image and likeness of God, shows an understanding of the importance of valuing and understanding oneself as the basis for personal relationships.

2. Created to love others (this explores an individual's relationships with others)

God is love. We are created out of love and for love. The command to love is the basis of all Christian morality.

3. Created to live in community – local, national & global (this explores the individual's relationships with the wider world)

Human beings are relational by nature and live in the wider community. Through our exchange with others, our mutual service and through dialogue, we attempt to proclaim and extend the Kingdom of God for the good of individuals and the good of society.

Each module is broken down into units of work:

| | |
|----------|--|
| Module 1 | Created and Loved by God |
| Units | Religious Understanding Me, My Body, My Health Emotional Well-Being Life Cycles |
| Module 2 | Created to Love Others |
| Units | Religious Understanding Personal Relationship Keeping Safe |
| Module 3 | Created to Live in Community |
| Units | Religious Understanding Living in the Wider World |

The programme adopts a spiral curriculum approach so that as a child goes through the programme, year-after-year, the learning will develop and grow, with each stage building on the last.

Running alongside the classroom sessions there are links to prayer, music and assessment activities.

4.2 Christian Virtue and RSE

Each theme begins with a statement of the virtues which are necessary to living well in relationship with others. These virtues underpin the teaching but also emerge as a consequence of it. Virtues are habits which are learned from experience and are gained through imitation. They express the qualities of character that we seek to develop in our pupils. These virtues reflect our Christian tradition but they are also, of course, fundamental human virtues which are universally shared.

4.3 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 and which cover all 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.

Section 5 Additional Information

5.1 Online World

We are aware that for many young people the distinction between the online world and other aspects of life is less marked than for some adults. Young people often operate very freely in the online world and by late primary school age and secondary school age some are likely to be spending a substantial amount of time online. Our teaching aims to support them in distinguishing between different types of online content and making well-founded decisions.

More broadly, we are aware that the internet and social media have other important characteristics which young people should be aware of in order to help them use them discriminately. For example, social media users are sometimes prepared to say things in more extreme, unkind or exaggerated ways than they might in face to face situations, and some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online. Some platforms attract large numbers of users with similar, sometimes extreme, views, who do not welcome dissent or debate. Our teaching aims to ensure that pupils are aware that certain websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (i.e. to enable targeted advertising). In addition, criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. Our teaching programme will ensure pupils know how to keep themselves and their personal information safe.

5.2 Equality Act 2010

Our Lady of the Wayside School is required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for RSE.

Our Lady of the Wayside School is mindful to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and we take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled.

5.3 Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

We ensure that RSE teaching is accessible for all pupils through high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to their needs. We ensure that our teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

We are also aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. RSE can also be particularly important for some pupils; for example, those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors are taken into consideration when class teachers are planning and implementing their programmes of work.

5.4 Involvement of Parents/Carers

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children.

As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Therefore we will support parents and carers by ensuring RSE material is freely available to parents, primarily through our school website - www.ol-wayside.solihull.sch.uk

Parents/carers will be informed 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.

Parents/carers will be consulted at every stage of the development of the RSE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. They will be able to view the RSE resources. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in our RSE programme. Our Lady of the Wayside Governing Body will not adopt this policy under the consultation process has been completed.

5.5 Withdrawal from RSE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education provided at school except for those parts included in statutory National Curriculum Science and that included within Statutory Relationships and Health Education (from September 2020). Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited to make an appointment to see Mrs Ashcroft (RSE Curriculum Leader) or Mr Taylor (Headteacher). They will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. They will always adhere to a parents'/carers' wish for their child to be withdrawn from Sex Education. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the specific sex education lessons until the request for withdrawal has been removed. Materials are available to parents/carers who wish to supplement the school sex education programme or who wish to deliver sex education to their children at home. Parents and carers cannot withdraw from any aspect of Relationships Education and Health Education lessons covering the changing adolescent body (puberty).

5.6 Answering Difficult Questions and Teaching Sensitive Issues

We are aware that there may be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs include: family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, financial issues, bullying and bereavement. 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.

Our Lady of the Wayside staff will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Staff will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.

Some questions may raise issues which it would be inappropriate for staff to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a pupil's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal and sensitive nature. Both formal and informal RSE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Staff know that questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later.

Some questions may not be appropriate for school staff to answer at all as they may fall outside our school's RSE programme e.g., a pupil asks a question about sex education. In cases such as these, the pupil will be encouraged to discuss this with their parents/carers at home and school will contact parents to inform them of the question which their child has asked -the pupil will be aware of this.

We believe that individual staff must use their skill and discretion in this area always mindful of the content of our RSE policy and programme and aware of school's safeguarding procedures if they are concerned

5.7 Confidentiality and Advice

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Where pupils ask for advice, staff will always explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Where confidentiality is to be breached staff will explain the reasons why. Pupils will always be informed what action is going to be taken and why.

5.8 Confidentiality and Child Protection/Safeguarding Issues

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the named child protection co-ordinator who takes action as laid down in the Child Protection Policy. All staff members are familiar with the policy and know the identity of the member of staff with responsibility for Child Protection issues.

5.9 The Environment for the Teaching of RSE

We believe establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, help us to create a supportive climate for discussion. Our ground rules are:

- We take turns to speak
- We use kind and positive words
- We listen to each other
- We have the right to pass
- We only use names when giving compliments or when being positive
- We respect each other's privacy (confidentiality)

Staff will 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 pupils.

5.10 Safeguarding

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. Staff are acutely aware of the needs of their pupils and will ensure no fears or worries go unnoticed. Where a member of staff 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. Sometimes it is clear that certain children may need time to talk one-to-one after the lesson closes. We will ensure time and appropriate staffing for this to happen.

Pupils may make a disclosure to an external visitor. We will ensure all visitors are aware of our school's safeguarding procedures, including procedures for reporting a disclosure.

5.11 External Visitors

Our school may 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 Our Lady of the Wayside staff led sessions. A member of Our Lady of the Wayside staff will always be present in all RSE sessions. We will ensure that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. All visitors we be expected to adhere to our visitor code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools'. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

5.12 Responsibility for the Teaching of the RSE Programme

Mrs Sallis (RSE Subject Leader) has responsibility for the RSE programme at Our Lady of the Wayside School. However, all staff have been involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. Staff believe that through their own behaviour they can model healthy and wholesome relationships as well as contributing to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

The role of the Headteacher and Governing Body

It is the responsibility of Our Lady of the Wayside Governors to ensure that the school is fulfilling its legal obligations. Our Lady of the Wayside Governing Body will also ensure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes in regard to RSE;
- RSE is well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of RSE provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn;
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

The Headteacher (Mrs Enstone) will:

- liaise with external agencies regarding the school RSE programme and will ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy;
- monitor the RSE policy and programme and will report to Governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy and programme;
- ensure parents are consulted on the RSE policy and programme and opportunities are in place for parents to express their views;
- ensure parents have been informed of the limits of their right to withdraw their child from sex education and have the opportunity to do so within these limits.

5.13 RSE Monitoring and Review

Our Lady of the Wayside Governing Body has assigned a specific Governors to monitor the RSE policy and programme of work. This will be carried out on an annual basis and their findings will be reported to the Governor Achievement Committee and to the full Governing Body, if the policy needs modification.

The RSE Subject Leader will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils' work. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires / response sheets/needs assessment given to pupils, and / or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

Reviewed – December 2023; Next review – December 2024