



## **URSULINE HIGH SCHOOL**

### **Wimbledon**

# **Education in Human Love: Relationship and Sex Education Policy**

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## Relationship and Sex Education Policy (RSE) – ‘Education in Human Love’ 2021

### Legal Requirements

Under the Education Act (1993) and the Education Reform Act (1998) all schools are required to maintain a statement of Policy regarding RSE and make it available to parents on request. This policy complies with DfE Guidance on ***‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers’ Feb 2019 update 2021.*** The policy also follows the Statutory Keeping children safe in education 2023.

The statutory guidance (2019, 2021) clearly sets out the curriculum content that secondary schools must deliver on RSE and Health Education. This document contains information on what schools should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools must comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. Unless otherwise specified, ‘school’ means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent schools, including academies and free schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units.

[Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education)

Students must be aware that the Marriage Act 2013 extends civil marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. Nothing in the act affects a Catholic schools’ right to teach on marriage or on same sex relationships in accordance with the norms of the Catholic Church, as long as this is done in an appropriate and sensitive way.

This policy is also informed by ‘Learning to Love: An introduction to Catholic Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) for Catholic Educators’ 2017.

### Equalities Obligations

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the students, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

### Vision & Aims of this policy

The aim of this policy is to set out the framework for Relationship and Sex Education within the context of our Mission Statement and the Catholic ethos of the school. This policy has been developed with due regard to the guidance of Catholic Church teaching and the requirements of the Law.

Relationship and Sex Education requires an integrated holistic approach which respects the fundamental dignity of the individual and the responsibilities of parents and teachers.

The aim of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) in a Catholic school is to bring the young person to the point where they can make decisions about their relationships and sexual behaviour which are fully informed, independent and congruent with true Christian values and moral principles.

At Ursuline High School, we aim to “build a caring and supportive Christian community” and to “develop personal qualities of understanding of self and others, self discipline, motivation, responsible maturity, creative freedom and integrity”. All staff and governors recognise that we have a full and active part to play in preparing our students for responsible decision making within the context of their Catholic faith.

At Ursuline High School we believe that our high-quality Relationships and Sex Education will stay with our pupils for life. As Pope Francis stated in Amoris Laetitia (AL) 280 “All of us spend our entire lives learning how to love”. RSE is **not** about encouraging teenagers to become sexually active. RSE is about providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make safe, healthy and informed relationship choices as young people and in the future as adults.

## **The consultation process has involved:**

- Consultation with students
- Questionnaires to parents / carers
- Audit and review of SRE curriculum content
- Consultation with School Nurse
- Consultation with school governors via the Ethos & Admissions committee

## **Relationship to other Policies and Curriculum Subjects**

RSE is to be delivered as part of the PSHEC framework and the Religious Education and Science curriculums. It includes guidelines about student safety and is compatible with the school's other policies on anti-bullying, Safeguarding, Equalities and Inclusion.

Students with particular difficulties whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of students.

Learning about RSE in PSHEC classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSE audit.

**This policy is available to all stakeholders on the school website. This policy has links with the Ursuline High School's Anti-bullying policy, the Safeguarding policy 2021 and the Equalities policy.**

## **What Is Relationship and Sex Education?**

The DFE guidance defines RSE as *“lifelong learning about physical, sexual, 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 student's knowledge and understanding of themselves as sexual beings, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationship with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience.

At Ursuline High School, this involves acquiring knowledge and understanding of,

- Catechism of the Catholic Church para 2331-2400, 2514-2533; Educational Guidance in Human Love (SCCE 1983); Gaudium et Spes (N52), Familiares Consortia (N37), The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality (N48)
- Ursuline High School Mission Statement
- DfE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance 0116/2000 paragraph 9, page 5. (July 2000) developing personal and social skills, and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes consistent with Catholic belief in the context of a Catholic School.
- ‘Learning to Love – An introduction to Catholic Relationship & Sex education for Catholic Educators’, Department of Catholic Education and Formation, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales
- Statutory Requirements – the statutory requirements for sex education are set out in **‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers’**

## **Rationale of the UHS RSE Programme**

### **Principles and Values of the UHS RSE Programme**

Ursuline High School believes that RSE should:

- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- Ensure that the information given to students is received within the context of the Catholic ethos and teaching, and is based on sound Christian moral principles and values.
- Be set within this wider school context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness within the Catholic ethos. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches.
- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, however, of paramount importance are the values of love, respect and care for each other. Bullying on grounds of sexuality will be dealt with as outlined in the anti-bullying policy.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students, consulting them about the content of programmes.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators, the Church and other mentors or advisers.

### **Aims of RSE Programme**

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour to raise students' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that we commit ourselves.

In partnership with parents, to provide students and young people with a “positive and prudent sexual education” which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person. We believe that this approach will reduce the risk of unhealthy and abusive relationships.

According to the Diocesan policy on RSE, effective RSE in Catholic schools must be designed around three cornerstone principles, namely that:

1. Students need clear, accurate and sound knowledge
2. Church teachings are presented in a forthright and clear manner, using the specific references provided by the Church
3. In presentation of both knowledge and Church teachings, age appropriateness and the awareness of child development is key. Instruction should match the child's developmental level and, as with all learning, be aware of individual differences.

## Content of the UHS RSE Programme

Our curriculum content will cover the required themes as set out in '*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers*'. The Law requires that maintained secondary schools teach sex education, human growth and reproduction, including education about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, as part of the following broad topics:

- Family
- Respectful relationships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- Safeguarding topics such as peer on peer

Sex and Relationship Education at the Ursuline High school has three main elements: 'attitudes and values', 'personal and social skills', and 'knowledge and understanding':

### Attitudes and Values

To develop the following attitudes and values:

- reverence for the gift of human sexuality and fertility;
- 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.

### 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;
- being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

## **Knowledge and Understanding**

To know and understand:

- the Church's teaching on relationships and the nature and meaning of sexual love;
- 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;
- the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation;
- how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

The theme of consent underpins all of our RSE workshops and modules. We introduce pupils to the importance of consent from Year 7 and this is revisited on a yearly basis and adapted to the age of each year group

## **Resources & Teaching Strategies**

The main source of RSE resources for lessons is TenTen's 'Life to the Full' programme. Life to the Full teaches Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church. Addressing the needs of young people where they are at in today's world, the programme is fully inclusive of all students and their families.

Teaching strategies include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- film & video
- group work
- values clarification

## **Balanced Curriculum**

Whilst promoting Catholic values and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. Students will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE, this includes those issues 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, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

## **Opportunities to teach safeguarding**

Students are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through relationships and sex education (RSE). We recognise that there cannot be a “one size fits all” style and there needs to be a personalised and contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and those with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The following resources are used to support teachers to understand and teach about safeguarding:

- DfE advice for schools: teaching online safety in schools;
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance: Education for a connected world;
- UKCIS guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people;
- The UKCIS external visitors guidance will help schools and colleges to ensure the maximum impact of any online safety sessions delivered by external visitors;
- National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: Thinkuknow

## **Organisation and delivery of RSE Programme**

Ursuline High School specifically delivers Relationship and Sex Education through its PSHE Programme, RE and Science lessons at KS3, KS4 and KS5 as well as assemblies, form time and sessions off timetable.

Much of the Relationship and Sex Education takes place within PSHEC and RE lessons. Tutors deliver the PSHEC Curriculum in KS3, KS4 and KS5 with support from professionals e.g. team of school nurses, where appropriate. Form tutors work closely with their tutees over a number of years and we believe that they are usually the best people to work with the students on many of the RSE topics as they are aware of each student's individual circumstances.

RSE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHE curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included.

The Science National Curriculum is delivered by staff in the Science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction which should be set within discussions around the importance of relationships.

The RE curriculum is delivered by RE teachers within the context of Catholic teaching with the aim of looking at relationships and sex from a moral perspective. Here students acquire knowledge and understanding of the Catholic teaching on the human person and sexuality. Students study Magisterial teachings on the theme of human love as part of their GSCE Religious Studies programme, including John Paul II's '*Theology of the Body*'.

More expert or specialist teachers are available to deliver on specific areas of the RSE programme and support tutors who are uncomfortable with teaching certain aspects of the curriculum. Support is offered with the year team or from Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, the Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Ethos and Heads of Year who will help with the planning or delivery of lessons if required to ensure that all lessons are in accordance with the school's policy.

Responsibility for the RSE programme lies with the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion in consultation with the Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Ethos. They work with Heads of Year and Tutors as well as with staff from the Science and Religious Education faculties.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They will be role models for students of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and students. They will also be contributing to the development of students' personal and social skills.

## **External Visitors**

Our school will sometimes 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.

Health professionals should follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

## **Inclusion and Differentiated Learning**

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual students in respect to students' 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 students to discrimination.

Lessons will also help students to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online-bullying, and attitudes and behaviours concerning homophobia, biphobia and transphobia), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help. (In looking at these questions, it is important to draw links to the school's equalities policy). The RSE programme also has links to safeguarding issues such as pornography, CSE and FGM.

### **❖ Ethnic and Cultural Groups**

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups whilst meeting our statutory legal obligations and the expectations of the Catholic Church with regards to education on human love.

### **❖ Students with Special Needs**

We will ensure that all young people receive relationship and sex education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Where possible all pupils will remain with their class for RSE lessons. Pupils with SEND or pupils who have been identified as likely to need SEMH support with RSE will either receive the support of a Teaching Assistant during their RSE lessons, or arrangements will be made for specific pupils to be withdrawn from RSE lessons with the rest of their class to receive a differentiated version of the RSE programme delivered within the SEND department. The SENDCO and Assistant Headteacher for

Inclusion will make the relevant plans at the start of each academic year, in consultation with parents.

### **❖ Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation**

We aim to deal sensitively with issues of sexual orientation and identity as set out in the guidance on meeting the needs of students who identify as LGBTQI, accompanying students on their journey of discernment, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that relationship and sex education is relevant to them.

## Parents and 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, the school will support parents and carers by providing material to be shared with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more. Parents/carers will be informed via newsletter 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 are informed of the development of the RSE programme and are welcome to review any RSE resources the school uses.

Parents have ***the right to withdraw*** their children from sex education but not Relationship Education or Science lessons. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Headteacher. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help their children with their learning. We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

## Other Roles and Responsibilities regarding RSE

### Governors

- Ratify the RSE policy
- Ensure that the policy is available to parents
- Ensure that the policy is in accordance with the legal requirements and the Diocesan Policy for RSE and other whole school policies, e.g., SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs
- Ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children
- Establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used
- Ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE.
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, and recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.
- Whilst it is essential that the governing body ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what students can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

### Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Diocesan Education Commission and the Local Education Authority. This responsibility is in part delegated to members of the Senior Leadership Team.

### Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion

The Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion is responsible with the Headteacher for the implementation of this policy and the quality of the RSE programme delivered to students.

They will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSE, the strategic vision for RSE in school and the devising of a spiral curriculum as well as the provision of in-service training.

### **Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Ethos**

The Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Ethos will ensure that the school's vision and aim for RSE as well as curriculum content allow students to make informed, healthy decisions in the knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Church's beliefs about the value and sanctity of human love. The Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Ethos may support the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion with the provision of in-service training.

The Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Ethos is responsible for amending and updating this policy where necessary in line with the tri-annual update requirement.

### **All Staff**

RSE is a whole school issue. All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their students. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE. All staff have been included in the development of this policy and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

### **Sensitive or Controversial Topics**

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 students, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that students are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme.

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE 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 students and young people. Therefore, the following principles apply;

1. The judgement of individual teachers will decide as to whether the subjects are suitable for class discussion. Teachers will try to answer pupils' questions honestly, sensitively and in such a way that takes the context into account. In all circumstances, the professional judgement of the teacher must come in to play.
2. Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during lesson time, e.g., where a student or young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.
3. If a question is felt to be too explicit, the teacher will acknowledge it and deal with it outside the whole class setting with the support of the Head of Year.
4. Teachers should establish a set of ground rules so that young people are aware of parameters.
5. Pupils should never be asked to disclose their sexual orientation or personal information about themselves or others.
6. Teachers and pupils will show respect for all genders, sexualities and different types of families
7. Any concerns that arise about sexual abuse or any other safeguarding issues must be followed up under the school's safeguarding procedures
8. Where discussions about sexual behaviour arise from apparently unrelated topics, teachers will give attention to relevant issues, again using professional judgement.

9. All STI's including HIV/AIDS will involve Informative discussions covering the transmission of the HIV virus may, by the very nature of the subject, include discussion of certain sexual acts and practices. Teachers will deal sensitively and objectively with information of this kind, and will always avoid the development of bias and prejudice. Teachers will challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about HIV and all STI's.

10. Teachers should also be aware that they may be dealing with students who are HIV positive or who have close links with others who are.

## **Supporting Students who are at Risk**

Students need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Staff and students are aware of CSE, FGM and peer-on-peer abuse. Here the focus is on 'early intervention' where staff know the warning signs and the referral procedure in school.

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 students and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a student 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 Safeguarding Officer (DSO) via CPOMs.

## **Confidentiality**

**All governors, teachers, support staff, parents and students must be made aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality.**

All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, will have the best interests of students 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.

Effective RSE should enable and encourage young people to talk to a trusted adult if they are in a sexual relationship or contemplating being so. It is desirable but not always possible that that person should be their parent or carer. The Law allows health professionals to see and, in some circumstances, to treat young people confidentially. Part of this process includes counselling and discussion about talking to parents.

Teachers will always help students facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers must explain to students that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, Headteacher, a member of the Safeguarding Team but that the students would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

**When a member of staff learns from an under 16 year old that they are having, or are contemplating having sexual intercourse, they must refer the matter to the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if a sixteen year old pupil is contemplating having sexual intercourse with a pupil below the age of 16, staff will lead on the most appropriate course of action in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.**

## **Monitoring and Evaluation of Relationship and Sex Education**

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion and the Heads of Year to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHE in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. All modules will be evaluated half termly with an assessment and an student evaluation.

The RSE programme will be evaluated by means of marking of students classwork, questionnaires, response sheets given to students, and / or by discussion with students, staff and parents as well as response to national and local contextual safeguarding issues. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy.

The Governors Ethos Committee is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.