



URSULINE HIGH SCHOOL
Wimbledon

Education in Human Love
&
Relationship and Sex
Education Policy

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Relationship and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

1. Vision

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 teaching¹ and the requirements of the law².

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 the 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”³. 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.

This policy is available to parents/carers on the school website.

This Policy has links with the Ursuline High School’s anti bullying policy, the Safeguarding policy and the Equalities policy.

2. The Consultation Process Has Involved:

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

3. 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”⁴. 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 the Ursuline High School, this involves acquiring knowledge and understanding,

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* para 2331-2400, 2514-2533; *Educational Guidance in Human Love* (SCCE 1983); *Gaudium et Spes* (N52), *Familiales Consortia* (N37), *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality* (N48)

² *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance* DfES 2000, *the National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy* and *National Healthy Schools Programme*

³ Ursuline High School Mission Statement as at 2017

⁴ 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.

4. Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for sex education are set out in the DfE's guidance booklet entitled 'Sex and Relationships Education' (2000). 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.

5. Rationale

"I have come that you might have life and have it to the full" (Jn.10.10)

At the Ursuline High School 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 a 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, will be placed firmly within the context of relationships as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE, RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHEC framework, Religious Education and Science curriculums as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred 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.

All RSE will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging 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.

6. Principles and Values

The Ursuline High School believes that RSE should:

- 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 an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.

- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- 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.
- 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.

7. Aims of RSE

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.

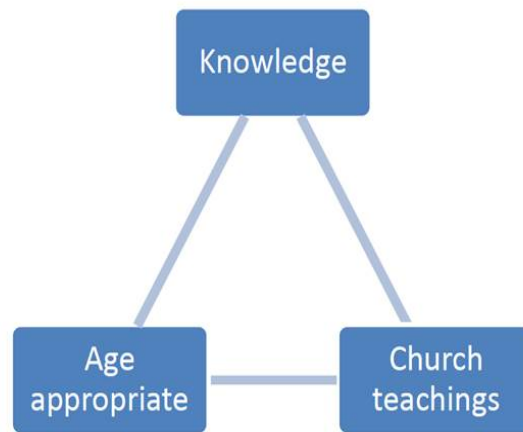
In partnership with parents, to provide students and young people with a "positive and prudent sexual education"⁵ which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

According to the Diocesan policy on RSE⁶, 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.

⁵ *Gravissimum Educationis* 1

⁶ 'Education on Human Love', p.6, Diocesan Policy for Relationship & Sex Education (Education Commission Southwark Archdiocese).



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.

8. 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 cyber-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.

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.

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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationship Education

Ursuline High School specifically delivers Relationship and Sex Education through its PSHEC Programme, RE and Science lessons at KS3, KS4 and KS5.

Much of the Relationship and Sex Education takes place within PSHEC and RE lessons. Tutors generally deliver the PSHEC Curriculum 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 PSHEC 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.

The PSHEC Programme is taught in every year from KS3 to KS5, and the Science National Curriculum in KS3 & 4.

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, factual replies will be given within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

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 the PSHEC co-ordinator 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.

12. 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 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 and are invited to an annual RSE evening.

Parents have ***the right to withdraw*** their children from RSE except in those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in 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.

13. Responsibility for the Teaching the RSE Programme

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lies with the PSHEC co-ordinator and the Assistant Headteacher responsible for the school ethos. They work with Heads of Year and Tutors as well as with staff nominated 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 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.

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.

14. Other Roles and Responsibilities regarding RSE

Governors

- Draw up the RSE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers;
- Ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- Ensure that the policy is in accordance with 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.

Headteacher

The Head teacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Diocesan Education Commission and the Local Education Authority.

PSHEC Co-ordinator and Assistant Headteacher Ethos

The PSHEC co-ordinator and the AHT Ethos with the head teacher has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy. They will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSE and the provision of in-service training.

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.

15. Relationship to other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This RSE policy 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 this group of students.

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

16. Students' Questions

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.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

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 use of clear ground rules, negotiated between teachers and students, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. (See also Sex and Relationship Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000, Department for Education and Employment, July 2000 for more detail).

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.

17. Supporting Students who are at Risk

Students will also 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).

18. Confidentiality and Advice

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.

Students will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help students facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should 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, head teacher, but that the students would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

In a case where a teacher learns from any student that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse or may be pregnant:

- the young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice. This may be at school and facilitated by the Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher (Inclusion). In a case where the student does not want to give permission for parental involvement the school will need to override confidentiality and will, in a sensitive manner, inform parents/carers and refer to appropriate agencies e.g. the School Nurse
- child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the senior member of staff responsible for Child Protection under the school's procedures.
- With the parent/carer permission the student will be referred to the School Nurse to be properly counselled about contraception and STIs,

Health professionals e.g. School Nurse and Family Planning Nurses assisting on the PSHEC programme in school are bound by their codes of conduct and Service Level Agreement in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

19. Monitoring and Evaluation of Relationship and Sex Education

It is the responsibility of the PSHEC Co-ordinator and the Heads of Year to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHEC in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. All modules will be evaluated every half term for Key Stages 3 and 5 and following PSHEC days in Key Stage 4) for student perception of impact and on student knowledge.

The RSE programme will be evaluated annually by means of questionnaires / response sheets/needs assessment given to students, and / or by discussion with Students, staff and parents. 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.