



## Bellerive FCJ Catholic College

# Relationships and Sex Education Policy 2023

### Bellerive FCJ Mission Statement:

- To help everyone within a caring community to grow in faith
- To respect and value other cultures and faiths
- To make the most of every given ability
- To enjoy and achieve personal growth and academic excellence
- To prepare pupils for their adult life, playing a full part in a modern global society

### History of Document

Issue No	Author/Owner	Date Written	To Governors	Date Approved	Comments
1	P. Taylor	Feb '18	Mar '18	June 2018	
2	P. McMenamin / C Sharpe	May '21	July 2023	12 October 2023	

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE). We set out our rationale for, and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website.

### **DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION**

The DfE guidance states that “children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way”<sup>1</sup>. It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of her or him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. In Secondary schools RSE should “give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).”<sup>2</sup>

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

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

### **STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. (There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, and although this does not apply to academies, Bellerive includes this in its RSE curriculum).

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further as both a Catholic and FCJ School.

### **RATIONALE**

This policy is rooted in our School Mission Statement. Inspired by the vision of the Foundress of the FCJ society, we aim to promote a Christian ethos that encourages students to value the pursuit of excellence and allows them to attain personal fulfilment by making a purposeful contribution to society.

### **Defining Relationships**

#### **‘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, will be placed firmly within the context of relationship 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 (and the Welsh Assembly Government) RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centered on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

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. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Our 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.

In partnership with parents, we aim to provide children and young people with a "positive and prudent sexual education"<sup>3</sup> which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

<sup>3</sup>Gravissimum Educationis 1

## **OBJECTIVES:**

### **To develop the following attitudes and virtues:**

- 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.

### **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.

**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.

**INCLUSION AND DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING**

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' 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 pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), 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 inclusion policy).

**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 pupils, 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.

**BROAD CONTENT OF RSE**

Three aspects of RSE - attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills will be provided in three inter-related ways: the whole school / ethos dimension; a cross-curricular dimension and a specific relationships and sex curriculum.

**RSE Curriculum content:**

**YEAR 7 RSE**

RSE – Relationships - the qualities and behaviours they should expect and exhibit in a wide variety of positive relationships (including teams, class, friendships etc.), the roles and responsibilities of parents, carers and children in families

RSE – Relationships - to further develop and rehearse the skills of team working including objective setting, outcome planning, cooperation, negotiation, managing setbacks and compromise, to further

develop the communication skills of active listening, negotiation, offering and receiving constructive feedback and assertiveness

RSE – Relationships - to explore the range of positive qualities people bring to relationships and that relationships can cause strong feelings and emotions (including sexual attraction)

RSE – Puberty - to manage growth and change as normal parts of growing up (including consolidation and reinforcement of Key Stage 2 learning on puberty, human reproduction, pregnancy and the physical and emotional changes of adolescence)

### **YEAR 8 RSE**

RSE - how the media portrays young people; to recognise its possible impact on body image and health issues, that identity is affected by a range of factors, including the media and a positive sense of self

RSE – that the media portrayal of relationships may not reflect real life and the possible impact of this on people’s expectations of relationships

RSE – different types of relationships, including those within families, friendships, romantic or intimate relationships and the factors that can affect these (including age, gender, power and interests)

RSE – the features of positive and stable relationships (including trust, mutual respect, honesty, equality) and those of unhealthy relationships (including imbalance of power, coercion, control, exploitation, abuse of any kind)

### **YEAR 9 RSE**

RSE – The importance of marriage - the nature and importance of marriage, civil partnerships and other stable, long-term relationships for family life and bringing up children, that marriage is a commitment, entered into freely, never forced through threat or coercion, and how to safely access sources of support for themselves or others should they feel vulnerable

RSE –Sex and Social media, the law, consent, behaviour and consequences, support services

RSE – about the unacceptability of sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, racist and disablist language and behaviour, the need to challenge it and how to do so

To recognise bullying and abuse in all its forms (including prejudice-based bullying both in person and online/via text, abuse, exploitation and trafficking) and to have the skills and strategies to manage being targeted or witnessing others being targeted

RSE – the risks and myths associated with female genital mutilation (FGM), its status as a criminal act and strategies to access sources of support for themselves or their peers who they believe may be at risk, or who may have already been subject to FGM

## **YEAR 10 RSE**

RSE – Body Image - to recognize and manage feelings about, and influences on, their body image including the media's portrayal of idealised and artificial body shapes

RSE – Age of consent / pressures to conform

RSE – STI's - about STIs, including HIV/AIDS, how to protect themselves and others from infection and how to respond if they feel they or others are at risk

RSE – to recognise when a relationship is unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of both emotional and physical abuse and violence including 'honour' based violence, forced marriage and rape) and strategies to manage this or access support for self or others at risk. To develop an awareness of exploitation, bullying, harassment and control in relationships (including the unique challenges posed by online abuse and the unacceptability of physical, emotional, sexual abuse in all types of teenage relationships, including in group settings such as gangs) and the skills and strategies to respond appropriately or access support

## **YEAR 11 RSE**

RSE – managing changes in personal relationships including the ending of relationships, the impact of separation, divorce and bereavement on families and the need to adapt to changing circumstances

RSE – about statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships experiencing difficulties or in crisis, such as relationship breakdown, separation, divorce, or bereavement, How to access such organisations and other sources of information, advice and support, Diversity in sexual attraction and developing sexuality, including sources of support and reassurance and how to access them

RSE – to understand the role of sex in the media and its impact on sexuality

RSE – to recognise the impact of drugs and alcohol on choices and sexual behaviour

## **YEAR 12/13 RSE**

- Relationships
- Abusive Relationships
- Keeping Safe
- Stalking and Harassment
- Losing someone

## **DELIVERY**

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. Learning about RSE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in other areas, especially RE, PE, Science and Computer Science.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can

include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

**Teaching strategies include:**

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- reflection
- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- values clarification

**Assessment in RSE:**

It is crucial that we have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSE as we do in other curriculum areas. A strong curriculum will build on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress.

Lessons are planned to ensure that pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged. Teaching should be assessed, and assessments used to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention. Student self-evaluations are often used to capture progress and to assess the quality of provision.

**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. Parents/carers will be informed by letter regarding the content of the RSE curriculum.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher.

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

## **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. Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE (in secondary schools/academies relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality such as the Equality Act 2010). 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.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING THE PROGRAMME**

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with Mrs. Sharpe (and the relevant curriculum staff; this will normally include science, religious education, information technology, physical education, RSE and PSHE).

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

## **EXTERNAL VISITORS**

Our school will occasionally call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools' 4. 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.

4 CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2016

## **OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSE:**

### **GOVERNORS**

- Ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- Ensure that the policy is in accordance with 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 Schools' Service and the Local Education Authority, also appropriate agencies.



### **PSHE/RSE CO-ORDINATOR**

The coordinator, alongside SLT, has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and 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 pupils. 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 should be aware of this policy and how it relates to them.

### **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 children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. (See also Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions, Page 23 for more detail)

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child or young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

### **SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE AT RISK**

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. 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 pupils and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher 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 inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE**

All governors, all teachers, all support staff, all parents and all pupils 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 pupils 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.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstance they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The RSE Coordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils work at regular intervals. 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. 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. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

**REVIEW**

Review of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors annually by the Headteacher, RSE Co-ordinator and appropriate members of the Governing Body and Staff.