



Xavier Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

For the following schools:

Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School
Holy Family Catholic Primary School
St Alban's Catholic Primary School
St Anne's Catholic Primary School
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
St Charles Borromeo Catholic Primary School
St Cuthbert Mayne Catholic Primary School
St Hugh of Lincoln Catholic Primary School
St John the Baptist Secondary Catholic School
St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School
St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School
St Peter's Catholic School
Salesian Catholic Secondary School
The Marist Catholic Primary School
St Edmund's Catholic Primary School
Teach SouthEast

This Relationships and Sex Education Policy has been approved and adopted by the Xavier Catholic Education Trust in December 2022 and will be reviewed in October 2026.

Committee Responsible: Audit and Risk Committee

Xavier Catholic Education Trust Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide an outstanding Catholic education for all the children in our schools. We will follow the example and teachings of Christ and everything we do will be inspired by gospel values. We will strive for excellence in all areas of our work and cherish every child in our care.

St Peter's School Statement

At St Peter's Catholic School, our purpose is to be *Christ To All*.
We nurture independent, resilient, inquisitive and motivated lifelong learners.
By being compassionate and generous in spirit, we aim to be a community whose every member feels uniquely valued.
We strive to enable all to be courageous individuals, having the integrity and the spiritual strength to make a positive difference in the world.

**Our school is built upon high expectations, great relationships
and The Rocks of St Peter's.**

Describe any consultation that has taken place

The school has undertaken:

- Consultation with parents/carers
- Consultation with governors
- Consultation with students
- Consultation with staff

Dissemination

The policy will be given to all members of the Xavier Trust Board, Local Governing Committee, and all members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website, the Xavier Trust's website and a copy is available in the school office.

Defining Relationship and Sex Education

The DfE guidance states, "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"¹. It is about the development of the student's knowledge and understanding of themselves as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with themselves and others, and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience.

In primary schools the focus should be on "teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults."² This would include the topics of families and the people who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

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

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

² Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, Page 19

also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).”³

Statutory Curriculum Requirements

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE, which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

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, 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 students. 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 students have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from and support will be provided to help students deal with different sets of values. It will also prepare students for life in modern Britain.

Values and Virtues

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.

Aim of Relationship and Sex Education and the Mission Statement

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

³ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, Page 25

persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that we commit ourselves:

In partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a “positive and prudent sexual education”⁴ which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

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, therefore, 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.

⁴ Gravissimum Educationis 1

Outcomes

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 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, we draw links to the school's Inclusion Policy).

Equalities Obligations

The Local Governing Committee 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, 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.

Programme/Resources

Appendices to this policy provide further information about the programme and resources for suggested use.

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film and video
- group work
- role-play
- trigger drawings
- values clarification

Assessment of RSE will take place within those areas taught in the citizenship, RE, Science curricula and through feedback from students e.g. via questionnaires.

Parents/Carers

We recognise that parents/carers are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents/carers in educating their children. Therefore, the school will support parents/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 by letter 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 must be consulted before this policy is formally adopted by the school. They 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 resources used by the school in the RSE programme. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent/carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents/carers continue to have the right to be excused from Sex Education except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum Science Orders. Should parents/carers 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/carers to help the children with their learning.

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. Requests to be excused are from 'Sex' only, not 'Health' or 'Relationships'. From three terms before the child turns 16, the child can overrule their parents/carers request to be excused.

Balanced Curriculum

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with church teaching, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by providing a 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 (in secondary schools/academies 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.

Responsibility for Teaching the Programme

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lies with the Leadership Team in charge of the Catholic life of the school (this will also normally include relevant curriculum staff from Science, RE, PE, RSE and Citizenship).

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. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'.⁵

Health professionals should follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing

⁵ CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2016

techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

Other Roles and Responsibilities regarding RSE

Directors

- Draw up the RSE policy, in consultation with parents/carers and teachers;
- Ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- Ensure that the policy is in accordance with other policies, e.g. SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs;
- Ensure that parents/carers know of their right to withdraw their children;
- Ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE

Local Governing Committees

- 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 Headteacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Xavier Trust Board of Directors, Local Governing Committee, parents/carers, the Diocesan Schools' Service, the Local Education Authority and also appropriate agencies.

School Leadership Team/Head of Citizenship

The co-ordinator and the Headteacher have 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. (The Curriculum Deputy and the Designated Safeguarding Lead may support them).

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.

Relationship to other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about student safety and is compatible with the school's other related policy documents for Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Students with additional needs 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 PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSE audit.

Children's 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 children and young people.

Controversial or Sensitive Issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be a matter of maturity, personal involvement or experience of children, disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best educated and 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 students, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. (See also DFE Statutory Guidance: 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, for example where a child or young person's questions hints at abuse, are deliberately tendentious, or are 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 students 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 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Confidentiality and Advice

All directors, governors, teachers, support staff, parents/carers 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. Teachers should explain to students that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, for instance in matters that are illegal or abusive. Teachers will explain that in such circumstance they would have to inform others, e.g. parents/carers, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher, but that the students would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE Co-ordinator alongside the Link Governor will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of students work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires/response sheets/needs assessment given to students, and/or by discussion with students, staff and parents/carers.

The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. Xavier Directors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Xavier Catholic Education Trust's Board of Directors remains ultimately responsible for the policy.