

POLICY – RELATIONSHIP AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RHE)

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Author:	K McKie	Committee responsible for Review:	FGB
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Introduction

The Governing Body believes that Relationship and Health Education (RHE) is an essential part of a holistic education since its focus is the individual, uniquely created by God in His own image. Through RHE children come to understand more about themselves, others and the beauty of Creation.

Aims and Rationale Our approach to RHE will be a positive one because:

- Sexuality is a gift from God.
- We are made to love and be loved.
- What we say with our bodies should reflect what we mean in our hearts and minds.
- Mature Christian sexuality involves openness and commitment to others.
- Genuine love is creative.

We affirm that human sexuality is an essential dimension of personal identity as it forms a fundamental part of God's gift of Life. We offer a profound understanding of the joy and depth of human sexual relationships.

"In his own image he made them, male and female he made them...God saw all that he had made and found it very good."

Aims

- To develop in pupils a sense of their own self-worth and uniqueness as created by God.
- To help pupils to come to a deeper understanding about themselves as they grow.

- To provide pupils with accurate, factual information about the reproductive process according to age, experience and level of understanding.
- To teach pupils to respect their own and each other's bodies.
- To teach pupils about the importance of love and respect in relation to all relationships and especially sexual relationships and to set this in the context of family life and marriage.
- To teach pupils about responsibility for oneself and others.
- To develop an understanding about the importance of parenting skills.
- To develop an awareness of the importance of emotions, feelings, instinct and right judgement in relation to self-protection.
- To present fact in an objective and balanced manner and to use appropriate terminology to enable pupils to discuss issues without embarrassment or fear.
- To provide a supportive environment for RHE to take place where questions can be asked and honestly answered.

Methodology

We intend that the school's RHE policy and programme shall be delivered in conjunction with the Religious Education programmes and also in accordance with the principles set down in other relevant school's policies such as, Equal Opportunities, Child Welfare and Inclusion.

In Year 4 the children are first introduced to how their body changes in puberty, at Year 6 children will be taught in more depth about puberty and the physical and emotional changes that arise because of it. A separate lesson will be set aside for this topic in which it may be appropriate to split pupils into gender groups. It may also be appropriate to invite the school nurse to speak to children about certain pertinent issues at this time.

Aspects of RHE will be covered as part of the statutory element of the Science National Curriculum.

Dealing with sensitive issues and responding to questions Teachers will answer questions honestly but with due regard given to the nature of the question and the age and maturity of the questioner.

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In some cases, it may be inappropriate for the teacher to respond to a specific question and the pupil will be referred to his/her parents. In the same way not, all questions will be answered publicly, and the teacher will need to assess the appropriateness of the question to consider if it matches the maturity and understanding of the whole class group.

Teachers should never feel pressured into discussing their personal views or experiences and should always respect the sensitivity of their position as a teacher in a Catholic school.

Working with Parents

The Education Act 1993 gives parents the right to withdraw their child from any or all of the schools Sex Education programme although certain elements are covered under the Science National Curriculum which is the entitlement of all children. The school recognises that good communication is vital in this area and parents are invited to review the school's policy and ideally view all the materials used beforehand.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors In accordance with the Education Act of 1993 the governing body will keep up to date the school's policy for RHE, in consultation with parents and will make copies available to them. They will make known to parents their right to withdraw their children from all or part of RHE provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum.

Teachers All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guidance of the physical, moral spiritual well-being of their pupils. Teachers will be expected to teach RHE in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available to all staff teaching RHE.

Parents The school recognises that parents are the primary educators of their children and will seek to support them in their task. It will ensure that parents are kept informed of what is happening in RHE in terms of content, delivery and timing.

Equality of Opportunity In light of the 2010 Equality Act, this policy has been written with due consideration to its potential impact (both positive and negative) on the many diverse groups of adults and children within the school. The school has ensured that to the best of its knowledge, the statements and procedures set out in this policy do not discriminate unjustly against any such groups or individuals.