

Human Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our School Motto is 'Asculta' which means to listen and this ideology to listen to the 'still small voice' underpins all the work we undertake in our school community.

Mission Statement: Living, Loving and Learning through Christ.

Theological Virtues

Faith: The virtue by which we believe in God.

Hope: The virtue by which we trust God.

Love (Charity): The virtue by which we love God.

SJCHS School Intent: Our curriculum is based upon the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity (Love).

1. Introduction

St Joseph's has adopted the Diocese of Lancaster's model policy as the central structure for this policy. The policy sets out St Joseph's High School's approach to Human Relationships and Sex Education and its place within the mission vision and values of our School.

2. Vision and Mission

While our faith underpins everything we do, we are an inclusive school and our doors are open to all young people, whatever their background and beliefs. Our emphasis is on providing an orderly, calm and secure environment in which our students appreciate and respect learning for its own sake, notwithstanding the importance of having fun along the way. In school we are particularly concerned to ensure that all students progress in their learning through personalised teaching and learning in a supportive, nurturing environment. Our curriculum gives due regard to subjects aligned with locally available employment. We have excellent links with a wide range of partners including schools, colleges and universities.

We provide learning opportunities, which are primarily designed to help students develop their academic abilities. We are, however, concerned in equal measure for the emotional growth and personal well-being of our students so that they have good self-esteem and can survive the challenges life presents. We encourage our students to develop critical and independent thought so that they not only survive but thrive.

Our curriculum offers, and enrichment activities are designed to provide opportunities for students to develop the skill of resilience and reflection. This enables them to consider the wonders and mysteries of life and discuss their personal values and feelings in a welcoming

environment. We seek to be a contemporary Catholic school and place Catholic identity alongside high quality academic teaching and learning. We recognise the opportunities and challenges life presents our students, our staff and our community, and seek to work together in a creative and collaborative context, in conjunction with our partner primaries and parishes. In so doing, we promote an understanding of the best of British values and help to create civic individuals who will “do the right thing” as adults.

Our Ethos

At St Joseph’s School we provide a loving, caring and safe environment where each student can develop their self-esteem and grow into ‘educated’ young people in the fullest sense of the word. We believe that through their experiences in our school community we help students to understand the moral, social and spiritual demands of the society in which they live. We help them to understand that in striving to be the best they can be, they will benefit not only themselves, but the future communities in which they may live.

By placing the values of the Gospel, the Catholic faith and a Christian ethos at the heart of all our interactions with each other in our school community, we believe that we give an additional dimension to the education of our students. By embracing the development of skills, culture, positive attitudes to learning and good citizenship in the context of Christian faith, we reflect the view of the Catholic Church that the education of the whole person is paramount.

We believe firmly in giving our students a voice in our school community. Teachers and other adults in our school encourage students to express their views in positive and constructive ways. We listen to and respect their opinions and act upon them, empowering students to take pride in being actively involved in their school community and in aspiring to excellence in all that they do.

We place a strong emphasis upon recognising and celebrating students’ successes; whether it is academic achievement or vocational and practical achievement, inside the school community or in the wider community, all have their place in our vision of an education which will produce well rounded individuals ready to fulfil their potential in the future.

Vision for Human Relationships and Sex Education

At St Joseph’s we are inspired by Jesus to lead lives that are purposeful and enable us to fulfil our talents. We care for one another and show mutual respect and love through our relationships with one another. Jesus is invited into our hearts. In the Beatitudes, Jesus invites us to lead a full life with Him by explaining what makes people blessed or happy. Through this we grow in our understanding of how loving our neighbour enables us to be happy too. Happiness can only be truly achieved when we have a good relationship with ourselves, recognising our God-given dignity, which enables us to enter relationships with other people in our lives, which help us grow and flourish, and we respect that everyone is a unique and beautiful part of God’s creation. We are all children of God, created equal and called to grow in love for Him through the person of Jesus Christ and to spread the Good News through the work of the Holy Spirit. We are gifted with the love of God and the ability to love others. Our sexuality is part of our total self-gift of the heart, and we seek to bring the young people in our care to know the beauty, goodness and truth of the Church’s teaching about how to lead a fulfilled life as they grow and change from children into young adults.

3. Procedures

The following groups have been consulted as part of producing this policy:

Staff

Governing body

Parents / Carers

Diocesan Education Service

Wider community (This may be the Parish/es or additional services, such as school nurse)

Student leadership

Students

The process started with a redrafting of the policy in the light of recent government reforms and best practice in July 2019.

The consultation process started with a presentation to the foundation governors and staff of the school in September 2019 who verified the content of the programme of study, schemes of work, resources and the draft policy. They explored how the policy would be delivered to students in 2019 onwards.

The next part of the consultation process will be to redraft the policy in the light of these meetings this process will be completed by Ian Nevitt in September 2019.

The policy will then be presented to the extended leadership team of the school in October, subject to approval a full consultation process will take place with the students, parents, local parishes, governors and staff invited to respond to the consultation policy via email, letter and a consultation evening during November.

The final version of the policy will be presented to the full governors meeting for approval and implementation in December 2020. The policy will be reviewed every two years by the governors, senior leadership team and other key staff.

An insert will be added to the school prospectus containing a statement about RSE teaching and details of where to obtain a full copy of the policy. This insert will be available on the school website. The Education service will be sent a copy of the school's RSE policy, and it is the duty of the governors to ensure that is up to date.

4. Rationale

As a Catholic secondary 11 -16 School in the Diocese of Lancaster Education Service, we use the term Human Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as we believe that relationships education is about all aspects of growing a fulfilled and happy life, sexual education is a dimension of this greater whole.

The defining belief of Christianity is that God took on human form. This endows the human form with an extraordinary dignity that goes beyond that of all other forms of life and shows that humanity alone can embrace this relationship with God. Therefore, our relationship with our own bodies is not casual but infused with the Holy Spirit. Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in the school must be rooted in this belief which is expressed in the Church's teaching about relationships, marriage, sex and family life. The Church offers education to young people as it is part of complete human formation. Education about human love is no less a part of a Catholic school's responsibility than teaching about any other curriculum subject. At St Joseph's we teach young people about how to form relationships, including understanding loving relationships and acknowledging that young people's first experience of love is in the home. We encourage the young people in our school to recognise that they are all children of God, and that each person shares a God given dignity. As they mature, we encourage them to follow the example of Jesus and live lives inspired by the Gospel virtues, enabling them to follow His commandment to "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:31). We also encourage young people to know that God's love for humanity is so great, He is waiting to forgive us.

"We are all sinners, but God heals us with an abundance of grace and mercy." Pope Francis. This is the basis for all relationships in our school. Teaching about relationships in our school is supported by Christian virtue teaching as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in line with 'Fit for Mission Schools'.

The Department for Education (2000) suggests that sex and relationship education should build on the children's own experiences, be sensitive to the specific domestic contexts the children come from, form attitudes and values towards relationships, develop personal and social skills and increase the knowledge and understanding of each young person as they grow about their relationships and well-being, including sexual health. The Diocese of Lancaster supports all these aims in educating about relationships and sex education though recognises that the Church's objectives in this are about complete human formation.

5. Statutory framework

The statutory framework that surrounds education about human relationships largely falls within three key areas:

The National Curriculum (2014)

Statutory Guidance: 'Sex and Relationships Education Guidance' (2000)

The Children's Act (2004)

Additionally, non-statutory guidance directs policy and guides the work of OFSTED as it seeks to promote what is perceived as best practice, which may go beyond the limits of statute.

	State Funded Maintained Schools	Academies and Free Schools
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Whole Curriculum	Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based* and which: -promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society. -prepares students at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.	
Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education	Department for Education: All schools should make provision for PSHE, drawing on best practice. Schools are free to develop their own PSHE programme to reflect the needs of their students.	
Sex and Relationships Education	Statutory for secondary aged children to have sex education that includes HIV, Aids and other sexually transmitted	
Sex and Relationships Education Guidance	Any school that provides SRE has a statutory duty to have due regard to Sex and Relationships Education Guidance DfE 2000	
National Curriculum	Statutory sex education forms part of the science programmes of study across Key Stages 1-3.	
Sex and Relationships Education Policy	DfE Guidance (2000) states that all schools should have an up to date SRE policy available for inspections and on request for parents or carers.	SRE policy is advisable but not Compulsory

*St Joseph's, as a Catholic School chooses to meet all of the requirements of a state funded maintained school as set out in the table above.

6. Virtues and Values

Gospel virtues and values underpin the RSE curriculum. The Christian tradition describes behaviours or habits that lead to happiness, human flourishing and a closer relationship with God as virtues. These virtues are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and fall into two groups. The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (sometimes love is used instead of charity) are about developing the habits of being open to the work of the Holy Spirit and developing a deeper relationship with God through living a balanced and happy, good life. The cardinal virtues of practical wisdom (prudence), justice, fortitude and temperance help people develop habits of reason, fairness, emotional resilience and self-mastery. They are human virtues and, as such, are part of the development of people of all faiths or none as they learn how to flourish, thrive and to have a life supported by strong and caring relationships. The cardinal virtues are drawn from the teachings of Plato and Aristotle and are held in common with people of many faiths and secular beliefs. St. Thomas Aquinas attributes the theological virtues as having their foundation in God, they complete the cardinal virtues and are the way people can reach "the abundant life" (John 10:10).

At St Joseph's we live out the Gospel values shared in the Beatitudes, throughout the life of the school. This is evident in the way in which staff model Gospel values and virtues and encourage students to do the same. Students are encouraged to progress their knowledge of moral behaviour throughout their life at our school through the work of all staff who teach or

work with them. This is particularly evident in the prayer and liturgical life of the school, form time and the work of all curriculum areas with particular reference to RE, Science and PE.

Students are encouraged to be thoughtful and reflective about their attitudes and behaviours towards themselves and others in all their lessons with a focus in RE and RP lessons through the curriculum. Students are also encouraged to develop self-confidence and a level of self-control on these occasions as well as the ability to distinguish right from wrong. This is reinforced in the day to day dealings of staff with students through insisting upon high expectations of standards and behaviour. Restorative justice is at the heart of our school Behaviour and Standards Policy Statement.

The school has a school prayer that asks our students and staff to reflect daily upon how they can grow in their relationship with God through developing their ability to listen and keep Christ at the heart of our community.

The school Chaplain supports staff and students through providing resources for daily acts of collective worship that encourages students to express what they believe about God in an atmosphere that is free from criticism. Through the work of all staff in form time, assembly and lessons students are encouraged to show love and care for themselves and others. These opportunities in collective worship and through RE and RP lessons help students to learn how prayer enables students and staff to make space for God in their lives and offers opportunities for reflection and growth. This work through the curriculum and through worship, RE and RP allows students to explain the choices they make with reference to conscience and a moral framework.

7. The Aims and Objectives of RSE

The aim of RSE is part of our wider aim to educate the complete human person. This is expressed in Fit for mission Schools (2009).

The fundamental needs of the human person are the focus of Catholic education – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual, and eschatological (Our eternal destiny). These fundamental needs can only be truly fulfilled through a rich and living encounter with the deepest truths about God and the human person.

This is why Christ and His Gospel must be the foundation of the educational project of each school and college, because He is ‘the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection’ (Congregation for Catholic Education, The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School). Therefore, the Catholic school or college is called to keep the Gospel whole and alive amongst students, families, and staff.

RSE should deepen the following areas of understanding:

To develop self-respect and love of self.

To invite young people to develop and deepen a loving relationship with God.

To invite young people to understand that their life has a purpose.

To invite young people to develop and deepen relationships with each other based on mutual respect and care and to understand this can be an expression of God's love.

To foster an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church about how to live a full life, a life of virtue, and the place of human sexuality in living a full life, marriage and parenthood.

A strong awareness of their own safety and the nature of consent.

To have an understanding of the law in England about Equality and Marriage, appropriate to age and maturity.

RSE will develop attitudes, personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding.

At St Joseph's:

We will seek to develop attitudes of awe and wonder for the gift and beauty of self, respect for each other as children of God and rejoice in the goodness of God's creation.

We will foster an atmosphere in our school which celebrates the work of the Trinity through the life of the school and its relationship with the Church.

We will teach children about the beauty of the Church's teaching about love and God's love for them which is shared in the Sacraments.

We will sensitively share the Church's teaching about the importance of marriage and family life as a way to live in loving relationships with others and with God.

We will seek to develop attitudes of responsibility towards ourselves and others, recognising the dignity in all.

We will seek to enable students to understand the choices they make and how they can help or harm themselves and others.

We will encourage students to learn about expressing their own emotions and being respectful of the emotions and behaviours of others.

We will encourage the whole school to be like a loving family recognising God as a merciful and generous Father as Jesus taught in the Lord's Prayer.

We will encourage everyone in the school to recognise their part in the school family and work together for reconciliation when relationships in the school falter.

We will encourage everyone in the school to value humility, mercy and compassion and to respond with empathy to the problems of others.

We will develop students' knowledge of when to say 'no' to behaviours or attitudes that harm their dignity or the dignity of others and to be responsible for managing their own risk.

We will develop students' experience of what it is to be truly happy so that they begin to understand the difference between happiness and gratification, satisfying the spirit rather than the senses.

We will teach them the virtue of patience.

We will teach students about the media and their choices, about what to watch, what games to play, what rules apply, especially when using social media, and that the dignity of all does not just apply to people who are physically seen, it applies to online relationships too.

We will encourage students to develop their own moral framework about accessing information online.

We will encourage students to recognise the influence of peer pressure and the moral integrity required to say, "No".

We will support students when relationships in their lives are challenging and teach them that there are people in the school who will listen if they are experiencing changes that make them frightened or uncomfortable.

We will teach students about the damage that drugs and alcohol can do to relationships with the self, as well as others.

We will teach young people that God is merciful and always waiting for us to be reconciled with Him.

8. Inclusion

At St Joseph's we identify that young people mature in different ways. Our teaching about relationships and sexuality is respectful of each child's starting point, their faith, culture and sexual orientation. Lessons are framed by this understanding and young people are encouraged to respect difference and develop an approach of dialogue.

Students requiring or requesting additional support, for example because they are transgender, will be treated with dignity and respect and offered support through our pastoral system, work with our Chaplain and through seeking appropriate help from other agencies.

9. Equality

The Governors have wide obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and will work to ensure that St Joseph's endeavours to do its best for all of the students, irrespective of ability (physical and mental), race, ethnicity, nationality, maternity, pregnancy, sex, gender identity or orientation or whether they are looked after children.

These obligations are laid out in the St Joseph's Single Equality Scheme Statement which can be found at:

<https://sjchs.uk/wp-content/uploads/Equality-Objectives-2022-2026.pdf>

10. Programme of Study

The Diocese of Lancaster has a programme of study for its family of schools. The programme ranges from ages 2-19 years and provides suggested areas of study and outcomes for the young people it serves. The programme is taught in RE and RP lessons both discrete and at relevant points in the curriculum, in cross curricular lessons, Science and fundamentally embedded in the ethos of the school through assemblies, classroom discussions and the centring of all relationships in our school on the person of Jesus Christ. The programme of study is based on the teachings of the Church and aims to help young people develop their sense of purpose and character. It should be taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and allow children to express alternative beliefs and viewpoints where they hold such views. The programme of study will be supported by published resources, recommended by the Diocese, as well as those created by the school. A list of recommended resources is available on the Education Service website.

At St Joseph's RSE is taught in RE, RP, Science and PE lessons some aspects will also be taught during Form Time. A wide range of teaching strategies are used, and all staff have received extra training in the delivery of RSE. Lessons involve the establishment of clear ground rules for discussion.

Parents are informed on the schools' website about how RSE is delivered at St Joseph's and lessons always take account of the Safeguarding Young People Whole-School Policy which can be found at:

[SJCHS-Overarching-Safeguarding-Statement.docx \(live.com\)](#)
[Policies and Procedures – St. Joseph's Catholic High School \(sjchs.uk\)](#)

Progress and understanding is monitored through regular assessment in RE, RP and Science. Students' well-being is monitored through a positive behaviour policy and by tracking students' outcomes based on expectations.

11. Parents

The Church recognises parents as the first educators of their children. The school should support parents in this task. The role of the school should be that of assisting and completing the work of parents, furnishing children and adolescents with an evaluation of "sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God". (Educational Guidance in Human Love (1983) Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education n69). Students' first experience of relationships and love are in the home. At our school we seek to work with parents and support them as their children grow and begin to develop their own character as well as experiencing changes in their physical appearance. Parents have been consulted about this policy before it was ratified by the Governors.

Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their children from RSE lessons through the school's website and the insert in the school's prospectus; however, they are not able to withdraw their children from statutory Science lessons.

The school will involve and support parents in learning about RSE by a sharing of an overview of the curriculum on the school website, the use of letters when visitors are coming to the school or when a sensitive subject is to be taught. The school also recommends some resources around safeguarding and safer behaviour to use at home. In addition to this there is information in the school prospectus and on the school's website.

[Secondary School Programmes 2024-25 – Ten Ten Resources](#)

12. Teaching RSE

RSE Coordinator with additional portfolio, Ms Leoni McManaman is responsible for the co-ordination, monitoring and line management of RSE. Elements of RSE, PSHE and Citizenship are delivered in RE lessons, co-ordinated by Mr Peter Hornak (SL – RE), RP delivers a substantive part of the Diocesan Programmes of Study and this is taught by the RE department, Humanities teachers, the Science element is taught by the Biology department. The Head teacher will monitor the implementation of this policy.

Elements of RSE are taught in RE, RP, Science and PE lessons.

All staff are involved in fostering attitudes, living Gospel virtues/values and shaping behaviour based on a Christian understanding of how to lead a good life. Staff are called to be role models of the school's ethos in their relationships with other staff members, their conduct towards parents and their care for the children in the school. Staff who are not Catholic themselves must conduct their behaviour in our school in accordance with the vision and mission of the school.

13. Supporting children and young people deemed to be at risk

The Governing Body desires that RSE lessons take place in a positive framework, where students experience a growing appreciation for their well-being, and that of others, and a deeper understanding that the Church teaches a path of wholeness of mind, body and spirit. Part of this is creating an atmosphere where questions can be asked openly, knowing that their questions will be answered and knowing that these questions will not be judged by staff or other students. It is vital, therefore, that time is invested in creating this framework of mutual trust and care, whilst respecting personal information. The RSE co-ordinator must be given access to support and training to facilitate teachers to enable such discussions by creating carefully negotiated ground rules and distancing strategies. The Department for Education (2000) offers the following guidance for dealing with questions:

Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Many teachers are concerned about responding to unexpected questions or comments from students in a whole-class situation. Having a set of ground rules should reduce the chances of this happening but teachers will need support and training so that they are prepared for the unexpected. For example:

If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the student of the ground rules. If the student needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as a school counsellor, school nurse, helpline, or an outside agency or service;

If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the student or teacher or both together research the question later;

If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a teacher, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the student will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the student later; and if a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's child protection procedures

Sex and Relationships Guidance, 4.5 'Dealing with questions' 0116/2000

Sensitive subjects in RSE always need to be framed so that the young people who are participating know that there is pastoral support if any of the issues discussed make them feel the need to talk further or share confidential information. This should always be done within the safeguarding policy and procedures of the school and it is paramount that all staff teaching RSE have up to date safeguarding professional development.

Questions asked by students that are a cause for concern for the teacher, for example because of their explicit or graphic content, should be addressed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Young People a Whole-School Policy and confidentiality procedures which can be found at:

[SJCHS-Overarching-Safeguarding-Statement.docx \(live.com\)](#)

[Policies and Procedures – St. Joseph's Catholic High School \(sichs.uk\)](#)

The school will ensure that this policy is available for all staff, governors, parents and students and the confidential nature of how to obtain advice and guidance as a result of any issues or questions that may arise.

Students will be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers about issues and questions that arise as part of the programme. It will be made clear to all that unconditional confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where illegal or abusive concerns come to light and these will be dealt with under the terms of the school's safeguarding policy.

The school is fully compliant with the CES RSE model Policy which is linked below:

[Relationship & Sex Education \(catholiceducation.org.uk\)](#)

Workload Impact Assessment Checklist:

- The school will produce an annual directed time calendar to monitor workload and working hours.
- This policy is consistent with teachers' contractual entitlements.
- This policy and its related procedures were introduced following full and proper consultation.
- This policy has specific regard in relation to workload impact; it has not added additional hours of working and does not duplicate any other existing policies.

- This policy has a two-year shelf life.
- This policy will not result in any additional meetings / activities.
- All staff have had proper training and support to ensure they are able to carry out the contents of this policy without additional burden.

Issued on behalf of the Local Governing Body by :-

Reviewed: June 2023

To be reviewed: June 2025