



RSE POLICY FOR ST JOSEPHS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL MAY 2023

1. Introduction

This policy has been updated from the 2019 policy

2. Vision and Mission

Together in Christ, Living, Learning and Growing.

As a Catholic school, we aim to fulfil this Mission

Statement by :



WORSHIP/RELIGIOUS DIMENSION

Using the experiences of prayer, worship and liturgy in developing a personal relationship with God and the faith. Providing a Christian environment where catechesis and evangelisation are central to the spiritual and moral development of each child. Working together to help the children to become more aware of God's love and presence.

COMMUNICATIONS & RELATIONSHIPS

Ensuring that the pupils experience of relationships within the school having a positive influence on their understanding of relationships. By working together, to help children grow as true members of God's family, with love, understanding and respect for themselves, for all God's people and for their environment. Creating a caring school community where all children, staff, governors and parents work towards the development of each child, with a friendship and openness necessary for success. Instilling Christian and moral values for oneself and others and an understanding of other races, religions and ways of life.

Ensuring that the Christian learning environment builds upon the pupils understanding of the Gospel values through effective learning and teaching.

Vision Statement – To share a commitment to continuous self-improvement, which will help ensure the spiritual development of all pupils and promote high expectations in learning behaviour . Pupils are encouraged to develop to the best of their potential in a caring, creative and secure environment that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Vision for Relationship and Sex Education.

At St. Joseph's we are inspired by Jesus to be the very best we can be. We look after one another and show respect and love through our relationships with one another. Jesus is invited into our lives. In the Beatitudes, Jesus invites us to lead a full life with him by explaining what makes people blessed or happy. This is about understanding how loving our neighbour enables us to be fulfilled too. Therefore, having a good relationship with ourselves and the other people in our lives makes 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, called to grow in love for him through the person of Jesus Christ and to spread the Good News through the action of the Holy Spirit.

3. Procedures

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

- staff
- governing body
- parents
- Diocesan Education Service
- students

In consultation with the Governing Body, staff, parents and pupils the HRSE policy was implemented in 2019, and has now been reviewed. The next review date will be May 2025.

The policy will be circulated to all members of the Governing Body and all members of staff. The school prospectus will contain a statement about RSE teaching and details of where to obtain a full copy of the policy upon request. The Diocesan Director of Education/Director of RE will be sent a copy of the school's RSE policy and it is the duty of the Governing Body to ensure that this is up to date.

4. Rationale

As a Catholic primary school in the Province of Cardiff, Menevia, Wrexham and Herefordshire we use the term Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) as we believe that sex education is set within a wider context of relationship education, which itself is about all aspects of growing a fulfilled and happy life. This is why the Diocesan RSE Curriculum, based on the CES 'Model Curriculum', organizes content in the three overarching themes of 'Created to love by God', 'Created to love one another' and 'Created to live in community'. Sex education in the narrower sense is but one dimension of this greater whole. For example,

The defining belief of Christianity is that God took on human form. This endows the human person 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 – our bodies are the dwelling place, the ‘temple’ of the Holy Spirit. Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in school must be rooted in this belief which is expressed in the Church’s teaching about relationships, marriage, sex and family life. The Church educates young people as part of complete human formation. Education about human love is no less a part of a Catholic school’s responsibility than teaching about Mathematics or English. At St. Joseph’s we teach young people about how to grow in relationships, including understanding loving relationships and acknowledging that children’s first experience of love is in the home. We encourage children from the earliest age to recognise that they are all children of God and that each person shares a God-given dignity. As children 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). This is the basis for all relationships in our school. Teaching about relationships in our schools is supported by Christian virtue teaching as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Legal guidelines suggest that relationship and sex 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. We support all these aims in educating about relationships and sex education by incorporating them into the wider understanding of human relationships and human formation as reflected in the relevant CBEW and CES RSE Guidance.

5. Statutory framework

The statutory framework around education about human relationships varies between England and Wales. The relevant documents for Wales can be found here:

a) RSE statutory guidance for Wales:

[https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/cross-cutting-themes-for-designing-your-curriculum/#relationships-and-sexuality-education-\(rse\):-statutory-guidance](https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/cross-cutting-themes-for-designing-your-curriculum/#relationships-and-sexuality-education-(rse):-statutory-guidance)

6. Virtues and Values

Gospel virtues and values underpin the RSE curriculum. The Christian tradition describes behaviour 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 simply '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 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). Our schools use the 'Catholic Pupil Profile' as our main tool for formation in virtue in an educational setting.

At St. Joseph's we live out the Gospel values shared in the Beatitudes, throughout the life of school by implementing the school mission statement and through the Jesuit Pupil Profile. – Grateful and Generous – Attentive and Discerning – Compassionate and Loving – Faith-Filled and Hopeful – Eloquent and Truthful – Learned and Wise – Curious and Active – Intentional and Prophetic

In St Joseph's we celebrate these virtues and discuss them weekly in our celebration assembly and during class virtue assemblies.

As pupils progress through the school they will develop a deeper understanding of what is moral behaviour and be able to say why this is important for personal happiness and for a closer relationship with God. In addition to the points made above, they are given opportunities to learn how prayer enables them to make space for God in their lives and offers opportunities for reflection and growth. This is done through pupil planned reflection, acts of worship, use of Ten Ten resources, Christian meditation , and assemblies.

7. The Aim and Objectives of RSE

The aim of RSE is part of our aim to educate the complete human person:

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 pupils, families, and staff.

RSE should therefore deepen the following areas of understanding:

- To develop self-knowledge, and 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 is 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 that is appropriate to the stage of maturity of the young people;
- A strong awareness of their own safety and the nature of appropriate consent;
- To have an understanding of the law in England and Wales about Equality and Marriage, appropriate to age and maturity.

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

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

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

We will encourage children 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 children's knowledge of when to say 'no' to behaviours or attitudes that harm their dignity or the dignity of others and to be responsible for their own safety.

We will develop children's experience of what it is to be happy so that they begin to understand the difference between happiness and gratification and value patience.

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

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

We will foster an atmosphere in 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.

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 background. Lessons are framed by this understanding and young people encouraged to respect each other in their differences, and develop an approach of dialogue.

9. Equality

The governing body has 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 pupils, irrespective

of ability (physical and mental), race, ethnicity, nationality, maternity, pregnancy, sex, gender identity or orientation or whether they are looked after children.

10. Programme of study

The Province recommends appropriate resources to its family of schools in Section 2.1 above. These range from ages 3-19 years and provide suggested areas of study and outcomes for the young people it serves. It is envisaged that this programme will be taught in discreet lessons, in cross curricular lessons, particularly R.E. and science and fundamentally embedded in the ethos of the school through assemblies, classroom discussions and the centring of all relationships in school on the person of Jesus Christ. The programme of study is based on the understanding of the Church of human nature and human sexuality, 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 will thus have room for the expression of alternative viewpoints by pupils/students.

A wide range of teaching strategies will be used, that have clear ground rules for discussions. Parents may be involved or informed that lessons will always take account of the child protection policy. Resources to be used are FP- Life to the Full (Ten Ten)

Parents

The Church recognises parents as the first educators of their children. Our schools assist parents in this task also in RSE, aiding and completing (where needed) the work of parents and 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). Children's first experience of relationships and love are in the home. At our schools 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 governing body.

Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their children from RSE lessons, or request their withdrawal, where such a right exists. Where such a right does no longer exists (as under the provisions of the 'Curriculum for Wales'), particular care has been taken to ensure that dialogue and involvement of parents is a priority concern of the school.

Parents will have been given the policy. Parents have been given the opportunity to attend a meeting. Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their children from RSE lessons although they are not able to withdraw their children from statutory science or RE lessons.

The school will involve and support parents in learning about RSE by:- sharing the programme of study – notify parents of the resources we will use – information in school website – listening to questions

12. Teaching RSE

The Deputy Head teacher will be responsible for leadership, co-ordination and monitoring of the programme. Monitoring will also be by RE Curriculum governor. Class teachers will be responsible for teaching the program along with other agencies to support, e.g. school nurse, Ten Ten resources etc.

All staff are involved in fostering attitudes, living Gospel virtues and shaping behaviour base 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 school in accordance with the vision and mission of the school.

Teaching and learning about human relationships will be part of the life of the school. However, the programme of study will be taught through cross curricular dimensions where appropriate, such as R.E., science and computing.

Sometimes, the children's learning will be best supported by using other agencies, such as the school nurse, or other visitors to school. Such visitors will be guided to read the protocol for visitors at St. Joseph's and will agree in writing to follow the instructions. The appropriate 'protocol' available on the CES website will be used for this purpose.

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

Like all other subjects, RSE always needs to be taught in a differentiated manner appropriate to the maturity of the children. It needs 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 framework 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 policy and confidentiality procedures.

The following guidance for dealing with questions in teaching RSE will be followed:

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 pupils 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 pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil 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 pupil or teacher or both together research the question later;
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, 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 pupil 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 pupil later; and
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's child protection procedures.

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

APPENDIX 1

PROTOCOL FOR VISITORS FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

The Gospel of Jesus Christ invites all those who follow him to discover the fullness of life. Catholic schools continue this mission of Christ that he has entrusted to his Church. The task of Catholic education is to educate children and young people in an environment of faith that will enable them to discover through their experience of learning the abundance of life that the Lord offers to them.

This vision of education strives to support the true flourishing of every human person who is part of a Catholic school community, acknowledging that they are made in the image and likeness of God and that the meaning and purpose of their existence is to be found in him. The consequences of such a vision of education commits every Catholic school to provide an education that supports an authentic intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and social development. As students engage in this process of education, fostering skills and attitudes that support their learning they are given the opportunity to discover their true identity, purpose and future destiny for their lives.

The strategic vision for Catholic education is entrusted to staff, parents, governors and shared with all other stakeholders who serve the school community. Amongst these stakeholders are representatives of a variety of external agencies that seek to support the school in its educational endeavours. Such collaboration and dialogue is essential in every school as it strives to provide an authentic Catholic education for its students.

Catholic schools do not exist apart from society and the Church is very aware of the invaluable contribution that external visitors have made and continue to make to our schools. Schools are encouraged to continue the excellent relationships they have developed with their guests for the continuing benefit of their students.

This guidance is offered to Catholic schools and external agencies who generously support their work. Its aim is to provide a framework within which expectations of visitors supporting Catholic schools can be clearly defined so that fruitful dialogue and mutual collaboration can be achieved.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

National guidance is that external services should be delivered in Catholic schools in a way that is consistent with the beliefs and values of these schools.

External advisers are to follow the policies of individual schools in group or classroom discussions.

Providers must understand the legal obligations upon the Foundation Governors. These are to ensure that formation and Religious Education in the school are based on the teachings of the Church, and are set out in the Trust Deed of the Diocese and other documents (such as sections 21(3) and 21(4) of the Education Act 2002 together with Regulation 8 of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007) and the Instrument of Government for individual schools.

It is key to remember that Governors and Headteachers are the ones who decide on who may come into the school as speakers and service providers, with some specific exceptions:

- ☐ Law enforcement officers in certain circumstances;
- ☐ HM Chief Inspector of Schools (Estyn/Ofsted);
- ☐ LA in certain health and safety circumstances.

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that its child protection policy is adhered to at all times.

WHAT CAN EXTERNAL VISITORS EXPECT FROM A CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

- ☐ A welcome acknowledging their expertise and the enrichment it will provide for students;
- ☐ Informative, supportive and cooperative relationships through a working agreement.

WHAT CAN THE SCHOOL EXPECT FROM EXTERNAL VISITORS?

All programmes, teachings or activities within the school should be:

- ☐ Beneficial to pupils;
- ☐ Consistent with Gospel Values and the teaching of the Catholic Church;
- ☐ Consistent with the school's Mission Statement, goals, aims and objectives;
- ☐ Built on mutual trust, respect and appreciation of each other.

MODEL AGREEMENT

WORKING AGREEMENT FOR ST JOSEPHS CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND EXTERNAL AGENCIES

We welcome all external agencies and providers and thank them for the contribution they make to our school.

SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

School:

School contact:

Tel:

Fax:

Email:

AGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

Organisation:

Contact name:

Tel:

Fax:

Email:

CRITERIA

All programmes, teaching or activities within our school must be:

- Beneficial to our pupils;
- Consistent with the Catholic Gospel values and teachings of the Church;
- Consistent with the school's Mission Statement, goals, aims and objectives;
- Built upon mutual trust, respect and appreciation of each other.

MISSION STATEMENT



DEPARTMENT/FOCUS

SESSION(S) TO BE DELIVERED

Date/s:

Time/s:

To: (e.g. pupils, parents, governors)

AGREED AIMS OF THE SESSION(S):

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMME INCLUDING METHODS:

SUCCESS CRITERIA: (THESE SHOULD BE MEASURABLE, NOT SIMPLY A COMPLETION OF TASKS)

EVALUATION METHODS: (STATE WHO WILL DO THIS AND REPORTING/FEEDBACK RESPONSIBILITIES)

Checklist Yes No Comments/action

Have the resources/materials to be used in session been reviewed including websites?

Have confidentiality issues been discussed and agreed?

Have behaviour management issues been discussed?

Have relevant school policies been explained?

Has the role of the teacher been discussed?

Has follow-up work been planned?

Have safeguarding issues been discussed including DBS checks?

Have any other issues or concerns been discussed?

Signed

Signed

(school)

(agency)

Date

Date

Did the visit fulfil the criteria above?

Did any issues arise?

Signed

Signed

(school)

(agency)

Date

Date

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who are the External Providers?

Any person or organisation not employed by the school who works or volunteers in school to deliver an element of the school's curriculum (e.g. Connexions, School Nurse, Sports Coaches).

What about parents?

Each school should develop its own system for ensuring that parents and volunteer helpers who work under the direction of a member of staff are fully informed about the school's expectations and their own responsibilities in that regard.

Why do we need a Protocol?

To ensure that the Catholic ethos of our schools is consistently maintained and not undermined either intentionally or accidentally and to provide a clarity of expectation

at the outset which will prevent any misunderstanding or cause embarrassment to either party.

Who should apply the Protocol?

All staff should know the Protocol and apply it but the final responsibility lies with the Headteacher for its day to day application and with the Governing Body for its adoption and review.

What about confidentiality?

Schools should have their own confidentiality policies/agreement and should apply these appropriately.

Does the Protocol just apply to Catholic pupils or all pupils?

The Protocol is school-based and when parents apply for a place they accept the ethos

the school promotes and the education it provides, therefore the Protocol applies to all.

Are there groups/individuals that should not be invited into school?

Any group or individual unable to agree to and uphold the terms of the Protocol agreement should not be invited into school.

How do I find out whether any organisation is unsuitable?

If you have any concerns, seek advice from the appropriate authority (e.g. Diocese, CESEW, RE Adviser, LA) or carry out research into the organisation on the internet.

What happens if there is a conflict of views?

Before provision is made, there should be discussion and dialogue. If a resolution cannot be achieved and the Protocol cannot be agreed then the agency or individual should be refused entry.

What do I do if a visitor breaches the Protocol?

Follow up with the individual or the organisation and discuss the incident. Ensure that the Protocol is agreed and enforced for future visits if the provider/individual is to be invited into school again.

What about web-based providers?

The school cannot control the internet but in discussions about the provision, they should ensure that they are made aware of any web-based resources which may be drawn to the attention of the pupils in order to judge their suitability.

