



Diocese of Lancaster  
Education Service



# **Human Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

## Vision and Mission.

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School: Education for life in the love of God and neighbour.

### St Gregory's Vision for Human Relationships and Sex Education

*It is our conviction that everyone is a unique and beautiful part of God's creation.*

*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 hearts. In the Beatitudes, Jesus invites us to lead a full life with him by explaining what makes people Blessed. Love of neighbour is a characteristic of the Blessed. It is our conviction 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 in us.*

## Procedures

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

- staff
- governing body
- parents
- Diocesan Education Service
- wider community
- school council
- students

The consultation took place through the Parish Priest, Chair of Governors and Head Teacher firstly sharing a draft policy to ensure it was personalised to our school. Parents, parishioners, staff and governors were asked to spend time reflecting on the policy and reporting any comments for further discussion.

In consultation with the Governing Body, the policy will be implemented in 2017, reviewed every *two years*, by the *Head teacher, HRSE Co-ordinator, the Governing Body and school Staff. The next review date is January 2019.*

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

## Rationale

As a primary school in the Diocese of Lancaster Education Service, we use the term Human Relationships and Sex Education (HRSE) as it believes that relationships education is about all aspects of growing a fulfilled and happy life, sexual education is a dimension of this greater whole. For example,

*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 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 schools responsibility than teaching about mathematics or English. At St Gregory's we teach young people about how to form relationships, including understanding loving relationships and acknowledging that children's first experience of love is ideally 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 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.

## **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
Whole Curriculum	Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based* and which: -promotes the spiritual, moral, emotional, cultural, intellectual and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; -prepares pupils 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 pupils.	
Sex and Relationships Education	Statutory for secondary aged children to have sex educations that includes HIV, Aids and other sexually transmitted infections	
Sex and Relationships Education Guidance	Any school that provides SRE has a statutory duty to have due regard to Sex and Relationships Education Guidance DfEE 2000	
National Curriculum	Statutory sex education forms part of the science programmes of study across Key Stages 1-3.	
Sex and Relationships Education Policy	DfEE 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

The framework above applies to St Gregory’s Catholic Primary School with the exception of the section titled Sex and Relationships Education

## Virtues and Values

Gospel virtues and values underpin the HRSE 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) 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 Gregory’s, Gospel values and virtues are central to the life of the school as lived in our mission statement.

## The Aim and Objectives of HRSE.

The aim of HRSE is part of our 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 pupils, families, and staff.*

- HRSE 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.
- To develop responsibility towards ourselves and others, recognising the dignity in all.
- To enable children to understand the choices they make and how they can help or harm themselves and others especially in relation to social media.
- To work for reconciliation when relationships falter.

## Inclusion

At St Gregory’s Catholic Primary School 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 encouraged to respect difference and develop an approach of dialogue.

## **Equality**

The governing body has wide obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and will work to ensure that St Gregory's Catholic Primary School endeavours to do its best for all of the pupils.

## **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. 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 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.

A HRSE information booklet of work is available on the school's website and parents/guardians are always welcome to seek clarification.

## **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) 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 HRSE lessons, however, they are not able to withdraw their children from statutory science lessons.

## **Teaching HRSE**

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 and agree to follow the instruction.

## **Supporting children and young people deemed to be at risk.**

Sensitive subjects in HRSE 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 framework of the school and it is paramount that all staff teaching HRSE 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.