



# SEX & RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

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# ST. PHILIP HOWARD

## CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



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At St.Philip Howard Catholic Voluntary Academy, we recognise that it is our duty to provide sex and relationship education which reflects the Catholic ethos of the school, meets the needs of students at all stages of their development, satisfies the expectations of parents and makes sense in the context of a society in which sexual matters are more and more explicitly expressed.

In our Catholic school, there are two important concepts:



1. the dignity and worth of each person who is made in the image of God
2. the importance of individuals coming together in mutual respect and support to live and work for the good of mankind and the glory of God

### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

***The School Community, through the provision of an education founded on Catholic Christian principles and the teachings of the Church, will care for all members.***

Our role is defined by the Gospels, the teachings of the Church and Statutory Guidance.

### **PRIMARY SOURCES/DOCUMENTS USED FOR GUIDANCE**

Educational Guidance in Human Love (1983)  
Religious Dimension of the Catholic School (1988)  
Education for Sexuality – C.E.S. (1995)  
DfEE Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (2000)  
S.R.E. Guidance for Derbyshire Schools (2002)  
Q.C.A. Guidance on Personal Social and Health Education  
National Healthy Schools Guidance  
Foundations for a Good Life (2004)  
All that I am Programme (2005)  
Towards Wholeness (2006)

Nottingham Diocesan Guidance on Education in Sexuality and Relationships for Secondary ] Schools (2008)

### **Defining Sexuality and Relationship Education**

The DFSF guidance defines SRE as lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

It is about the development of the student's knowledge and understanding of her/him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. The DCFS document identifies three main elements:



“attitudes and values, personal and social skills, knowledge and understand”.

### **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING**

- Learning and understand of physical development at appropriate stages
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- Careful consideration of contraception and family planning issues
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay
- Understanding the true implications and consequences of abortion

### **ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

- Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral considerations
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable loving relationships for the nurture of children
- Learning the value of respect, love and care
- Explaining, considering and understanding moral dilemmas □ Developing critical thinking as part of decision making

### **PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS**

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Developing self respect and empathy for others
- Learning to make choices based on understanding of difference and with the absence of prejudice
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made □ Managing conflict
- Learning how to avoid exploitation and abuse

St.Philip Howard Catholic School can support the statement and the main elements but we take it further.

### **Our Rationale for Sexuality and Relationship Education**

It is based on our Christian understanding of what it means to be human. We are involved in Sexuality and Relationship Education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and the human person: God is community – a Trinity of love.



We believe that:

- We are made in God's image, Jesus is 'Word-made-flesh', and all flesh is holy.
- Jesus' command to love is the basis of all Christian morality. ☐ Humans are created out of love.
- To be human is to relate – we exist in relationship.
- We ought to live in 'right relationships' with the whole of creation.
- There is a need to overcome misunderstanding and the distortion of views and values often portrayed by the media.

**Aims and Objectives:** These include both religious, moral and educational aspects and the promotion and development of attitudes and values which are truly gospel inspired, such as love, truth, justice, freedom, integrity and reconciliation. To provide, appropriate to age and ability, an accurate knowledge and understanding about sexuality and relationships. To enable students to develop personal and social skills to be confident in right relationships, to keep safe and be protected from exploitation.

### **AIMS**

- To educate in a context of love and responsibility
- To help students feel at ease with themselves
- To build up attitudes and standards which students hold with a sense of personal commitment and which will help them to make the right choices
- To give students a sense of wonder at creation and thanksgiving for the gift of sexuality
- To provide a programme which caters for students' needs and is sensitive to individuals
  
- To provide a forum where students can share their concerns and where they feel listened to sensitively
- To help students to resist peer, social and media pressures where necessary
- To develop skills in personal relationships, decision-making, understanding of risks and skills to keep themselves safe.

In the Catholic Schools young people are respected and accepted whatever their background. The school will acknowledge that the young people may have differing values and priorities and will have varied maturation rates and levels of sexual awareness. The pressures and influences on them, from society and the media, often subliminal, will not be underestimated. The school will be ready to accompany them on their journey to adulthood, modeling for them and enabling them to become capable of whole and wholesome relationships, and discerning their true values and priorities in life.



## **GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

- To have an awareness of where the young people are in their knowledge and understanding of human sexuality, so that their needs and concerns can be identified and addressed.
- To facilitate in the students the development of self-love and self-worth as creatures made in the image and likeness of God in order to reach out to others in respect and love.
- To develop an understanding of emotional, moral, spiritual, social and personal aspects of human sexuality.
- To enable students to consider critically the values of the modern world in general and their teenage subculture in particular with regard to human sexuality.

**UNDERSTANDING ROLES:-** Many people – parents, governors, teachers and students themselves will all have important parts to play in the sex and relationships education of students in our school.

### **1. PARENTS**

We acknowledge that parents are the first and best education of their children and that the school works in partnership with them. Both church and state recognize the central and primary role of parents in helping their children's physical spiritual and psychological growth in preparation for the challenges and responsibilities of adult sexual life. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the provision except from those elements required by the National Curriculum science orders. Parents will be informed about the programme and resources used and will be expected to have dialogue with their children about lessons and advice given in school.

### **2. GOVERNORS**

The Governors are responsible for ensuring that there is a Sex and Relationship Education Policy and that it has been drawn up in consultation with the school leadership and professionals who are responsible for the delivery, quality control and assurance of the provision. They will ensure that the policy is made available to key partners, that parents know of their right to withdraw their children and that the programme and resources are monitored and evaluated both the taught curriculum and in the wider areas of school life.



### **3. TEACHERS / SCHOOL LEADERSHIP / IDENTIFIED STAFF**

All adult members of the school community are role models and educators in this aspect of students' education. The school leadership team and appropriate staff will:

- I. advise governors on the content and organization of Sex and Relationship education;
- II. develop suitable procedures for dealing with requests from parents to withdraw their children from sexuality education lessons; III. contribute to reviewing existing provision;
- IV. use professional skills in developing the curriculum;
- V. draw on help and guidance from relevant sources, e.g. Diocesan Education Service, health professionals, marriage and family life workers, the ethos and mission of the school while meeting statutory requirements;
- VI. teach and discuss the Relationship and Sexuality education curriculum as detailed in the schemes of work;
- VII. participate in monitoring and evaluating the provision work from a basis of understanding and respect for the values of the community in which they are professionally serving.

It is hoped that all students will be willing to listen to the teachings of the Church and become aware of the variety of other views regarding moral issues related to S.R.E. and that they will have a positive attitude and sense of responsibility regarding their own and others' sexuality. It is hoped that students will have a sense of self-esteem that enables them to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility.

### **MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE S.R.E. CURRICULUM**

1. Most modules will be delivered in mixed class groups.
2. There may be occasions when other agencies are involved that single sex groups may be used e.g. school nurse.
3. It will be taught by specialists in their curriculum areas e.g. R.E., P.S.H.E., Science and with the occasional use of speakers.
4. Outside speakers will only be used in this area of the curriculum, after careful vetting and enhancement of their knowledge in relation to the teachings of the Church.
5. It is important that boundaries are maintained in class discussion and that personal questions to staff are avoided.



6. Staff will deal with confidentiality, questions and any disclosures in line with the school's policies concerning child protection and safeguarding, equalities, citizenship and community cohesion.

### **Answering and Asking Questions on S.R.E**

In most cases teachers will attempt to answer children's questions and concerns in a sensitive, age and development appropriate manner. Individual teachers will use their skill and discretion in these situations and if necessary refer to the PSHE Co-ordinator for advice and support. Teachers will also follow the following guidance:

- Teachers will establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting
- If a child's question is inappropriate to address with the whole class the teacher should acknowledge the question and attend to it later on an individual basis.
- If a question is too personal the teacher should remind the class of the ground rules.
- Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way which encourages thoughtful participation
- Pupils may have opportunities to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box. The teacher will have time to prepare answers to questions before the next lesson, and can choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate to address in whole class lessons.
- If a teacher is concerned that a child may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation then they will make a referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the usual child protection procedures are followed.

### **LIVING IN OUR WORLD**

Young people in Catholic schools come from all sections of society and from varied family backgrounds. For some, home is a secure and happy place where the faith is lived and shared. For others, their families may be of other faiths or little or no beliefs where there may be less support and security. Our young people do not live in isolation from the pressures on them to be sexually active.

It is natural for caring adults to want to protect their children and young people from information, attitudes and lifestyles which they themselves find distasteful. It is however important to recognize the power and confusion of informal learning from personal family problems, marriage and relationship breakups, experience of friends, peer group pressure, influence of the media, declining values of society and secularization. It is essential that the



following issues should be covered in a sensitive and common sense manner respecting the values and teachings of the Church – dating and teenage relationships, Sex and the Law, views on chastity and fidelity, attitude to masturbation, risks of promiscuity and casual sex, STIs, HIV/Aids, attitudes to and methods of contraception, marriage and being married, divorce, remarriage, cohabitation, homosexuality and lesbianism, abortion.

### **DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FRAMEWORK FOR SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION**

Sex and Relationship Education is an important area of personal, social and health education and of course within our Religious Education programmes of study. There is a specific focus within spiral S.R.E. modules delivered at KS3 in Years 7, 8 and 9 R.E. and within PSHE lessons and at KS4 in Religious Studies and in PSHE lessons. The schemes of work for PSHE, Religious Education and Science all give details of the content of the S.R.E. programmes of study provided by these respective departments. The Head of R.E. and other KS4 R.E. teachers will provide the framework for the teaching of the Church in relation to Marriage, Partnerships, Safer Sex, Family Planning, Abortion, Contraception etc. This framework will complement the S.R.E. modules and the Science National Curriculum which collectively will provide the Sex and Relationship Curriculum at St.Philip Howard.

### **ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS**

Aspects of S.R.E. particularly moral issues may well be covered in Assemblies, Year Meetings and some tutorials. Support is available from the pastoral team members for individual students who feel concerned or threatened by some aspect of their development, their relationships and their environment. Counselling by pastoral staff, the school nurse or other specialists is made available to individuals in specific situations.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The policy and the Programmes of Study will be regularly reviewed by the SLT, Governor team responsible for S.R.E. and the appropriate leaders in the delivery of S.R.E. The Headteacher and Governors will monitor the content, delivery and resources used in S.R.E. on a termly basis and reports will be provided for all the School Governors and other required groups e.g. Diocesan / L.A. personnel.

### **REVIEW**

ST. PHILIP HOWARD  
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



The Governing Body will review the S.R.E. policy annually during the AutumnTerm with any amendments coming to the Autumn meeting of the Full Governors.