

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School



## Policy for Sex and Relationship Education

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To encourage children to develop an awareness of and respect for themselves and others;  
To include the development skills and exploration of attitudes, values and emotions as well as biological facts;  
To promote positive attitudes towards love and sexuality;  
To value family life;  
To develop a positive self image.

**Description of our school**

St Mary's Catholic School is a Voluntary Aided, co-educational Catholic Primary school for children from 5 to 11 years.

The Headteacher, class teachers, school staff and governors all work together to create a secure loving and caring community. Children are encouraged to discuss problems with staff and we encourage parents to keep fully informed of any relevant and up to date information about their child.

In keeping with our Mission Statement, the school shares the responsibility for providing a well balanced education fulfilling the needs of each unique individual, We need to therefore support the personal, moral and social development of all pupils, ensuring that they have the ability to accept their own and others sexuality, in positive ways and to enjoy relationships which are based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility, free from any abuse.

We believe that children should receive a positive education in matters relating to sex taking into account the primary responsibility for providing this rests with parents.

In preparing this policy we take notice of the teachings of the Catholic Church and have referred to the following documentation: -

- The school Mission Statement
- 'Education in Personal Relationships', the Bishops of England and Wales 1987
- Education Reform Act 1988
- 'Education in Sexuality', the Catholic Education Service

- Sex and Relationship Education DFEE Guidance Document 0116/2000 (replacing Circular 5/94)

As a Catholic school we must consider the guidance of the Diocese and the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales as well as current legislation on Sex Education. With this in mind we do not deal with sex education in isolation but view it in the wider context of Personal Relations, and Education for Personal Relationships. We proclaim a person-centered approach to education therefore it seems important that all aspects of personal development are treated this way.

We also have a clear understanding that the primary responsibility for educating young people in matters of sexuality rests with the parents/guardians. Our role is to assist parents in carrying out this task.

The Bishops' Conference Low Week 1987 recognised this but adds, "a major commitment on the part of the Christian Community is needed to collaborate with families". We will therefore formulate our policy with clear consultation with parents over this crucial matter.

Central to our policy are the foundations laid by the Bishops' conference 1987. This has helped us to formulate our aim. The Bishops conference of 1994 reiterated the statements made in 1987. Appendix 3 Bishops Conference Low Week 1994.

**Developmental** - The programme will be developmental and provide the children with the necessary information and answers to questions.

### **Safeguarding**

All staff have a duty of care to ensure that children are safe from sexual and physical abuse. Staff need to be aware that during the education of Sex and Personal relationships any pupil that raises concern must report this to the DSP which is the headteacher or assistant head in her absence.

### **Education for Personal Development**

A whole person approach will be established viewing sex education in the wider context of personal relationships. Our children are entitled to a lived experience of people enjoying life-enhancing relationships

Aims and objectives of the school sex education policy and programme

## Policy Aims

1. Education in sexuality should be developmental; it should enable sexuality to be integrated into the personal growth from infancy through adolescence and beyond. This will enhance the complete formation of the whole person. The young person must realise that sexuality is one of God's gifts to us and it must be conveyed to them within the wider context of human relationships, not simply as the biological process of human reproduction.
2. The whole curriculum in our school conveys important values and this enables the gradual moral development of all our pupils. We cannot teach sexuality aside from moral principles or the context of a loving human relationship. We must take account that as children their interpretations of loving relationships are continually undergoing formation from the experiences they encounter. More than ever do our young people need our help and understanding as they struggle to live their lives as members of our Christian community and society.
3. Education in sexuality is but part of education in relationships. Each individual child is entitled to experience within our school a climate where quality of relationships; staff/pupil, staff/parent, should be marked by respect, honesty, warmth, trust and tolerance.
4. Education in sexuality will be incorporated into the teaching of science, religious education and personal social and health education issues and citizenship.
5. To foster good relationships within our community with each other and the young people in our care. We will help the children to develop personal sensitivities and abilities, which will enable them to cope with the variety of relationships they experience in the future. A whole school approach is necessary. Attitudes and values are developed through a child's experience of school life.
6. We aim at developing good relationships between pupils and staff. We aim to include all staff in this policy and strive to make the ethos of the school conducive to good relationships.
7. The various dimensions of relationships will demand a cross curricular approach allowing each curricular area to make its

own unique contribution to this area." The church is formally opposed to an often widespread form of imparting sex information dissociated from moral principles"(Familiarias Consortio 37)

8. Proper regard should be given to the process of moral development for young people. They should develop an appreciation of, and learn to value, the doctrine taught, not to simply acquire knowledge imparted by the teacher.
9. We aim to be aware of and sensitive to the world in which the children are growing up and help them to make informed decisions.

We believe the class teacher is best placed to implement sex education, making judgments on appropriateness and suitability of work, is committed to working towards equality of opportunity to all aspects of school life.

**We therefore aim to:**

1. stress the fact that the gift of self is Gods greatest gift
2. explore the meaning and value of life and give some appreciation of the values of family life.
3. assist the work of parents
4. provide an accurate knowledge of health issues
5. provide the opportunity for our children to explore their own attitude towards health and relationships bearing in mind the effects on other people and agencies on these attitudes. We aim to correct miss information.
6. help our children to realise that their actions have likely outcomes, both short and long term.
7. provide the children with a properly formed conscience to enable them to make judgments and take right actions in many and varied situations.
8. stress that sex is the language of committed love

**Objectives**

1. To have an awareness of the stage of development and personal circumstances of each child so that concerns can be identified.

2. To encourage the acquisition of self-respect and self worth recognizing that each of us is a unique individual, created by God.
3. Encourage the children to value life and to appreciate the importance and uniqueness of family life.
4. To appreciate that love has to be the basis of a meaningful relationship and that there are many qualities that are needed to help relationships grow.
5. To encourage children to share their worries and concerns so that they can be offered the appropriate support they need.
6. To ensure that they are given the correct and appropriate information.
7. To consider the issues concerned with different beliefs, values and cultures. To acquire the basic skills that when developed further will ultimately lead to them taking responsibility of their bodies for themselves.
8. To enable pupils to have some understanding of their bodies' physical and emotional development. They need to begin to look at the issues of fertility, the cycle of the female and the constant fertility of the male and human reproduction and the emotional changes involved.

### **Sex and relationship education has three main elements**

#### **Attitudes and values**

- ❖ Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral considerations;
- ❖ Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable relationships for the nurture of children;
- ❖ Learning the value of respect, love and care;
- ❖ Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
- ❖ Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.
- ❖ Personal and social skills

#### **learning to make choices based on an understanding**

- ❖ Learning to manage emotions and relationships with confidence and sensitively;
- ❖ Developing self-respect and empathy for others; understanding of difference and absence of prejudice;
- ❖ Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made, and managing conflict and learning how to avoid exploitation and abuse.
- ❖ **Knowledge and understanding** (at appropriate stages)

- ❖ Learning about and understanding physical development;
- ❖ Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;

### **Content for the School Education Programme**

This will be prepared in a separate document by the teacher with responsibility for Education in Sexuality in consultation with those teachers with responsibility for the whole school teaching of science and religious education. It will outline content and the organisation of the programme.

### **Sex and Relationship Education within the Personal Social Health Education and Citizenship Framework**

Sex and Relationship Education should be supported by the schools wider curriculum for PSHE. In this way we can ensure that pupils:

- receive their sex education in the wider context of relationships and
- are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life.

The combined PSHE and Citizenship framework at KS1&2 is developed through four broad themes

- developing confidence and responsibilities and making the most of pupils' abilities
- preparing to play an active role as citizens;
- developing a healthier, safer lifestyle;
- developing good relationships and respecting differences between people.

The relevant parts of the National Curriculum Science should be delivered through these themes and within the context of the National Healthy Schools Standard.

We will ensure that all children

- ❖ Develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships

- ❖ Are able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work
- ❖ Can protect themselves and ask for help and support
- ❖ Are prepared for puberty.

### **Whole school approach**

A whole school approach is necessary. Attitudes and values are developed through a child's experience of school life.

We aim at developing good relationships between pupils and staff. We aim to include all staff in this policy and strive to make the ethos of the school conducive to good relationships.

### **Methodology**

All Sex Education is presented within a Christian context and wherever appropriate is linked with the Religious Education Programme, "The Way, The Truth and The Life"

A variety of teaching and learning styles are employed including group work, discussion, video and research. At times it is recognised that there may be need to work in single gender groups where some issues may be discussed more openly.

Ultimately the choice of approach will rest with the class teacher and their knowledge of the pupils.

### **Strategies for teaching**

- ❖ **Establishing 'ground rules' with the pupils, eg:**

- no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question;
- no one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
- only correct names for body parts will be used, and explained factually

- ❖ **Using 'distancing' techniques to depersonalise discussion, eg**

- role-play, case studies, videos

- ❖ **Knowing how to deal with unexpected questions or comments, eg.**

by establishing clear parameters about what is appropriate for a whole-class setting; and

by being prepared to discuss the matter later on an individual basis or to refer the pupil to an appropriate person

- ❖ **Using group discussion and project learning eg:**

'circle time', case studies and other structured activities

providing factual information in written form for pupils to keep for future reference

❖ **Encouraging reflection** eg:

by asking what pupils have learned from the discussion and/or from the experience of others, the extent to which this has helped them, and what else they think they need to think about or learn.

### **Working with Parents**

The school is very committed to working with parents. As directed by the Education Act 1993 pupils can be withdrawn from parts of Sex Education that are not part of the National Curriculum. Parents who feel this is necessary for their child would be welcomed into school to discuss this with the Headteacher and individual concerns may be considered.

Materials used will always be made available for parents on request.

#### **Parents' Right of Withdrawal**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from lessons involving Sex Education. However, because of the aims and objectives of our school in which Sex Education is seen as such an integral part of your child's education, we hope that this situation will not arise.

Parents are given the opportunity to access all materials used prior to the lesson.

If required, the school nurse could offer guidance and support to the pupils.

#### **Child Sexual Abuse**

The school adheres closely to the Local Authority guidance documents.

### **Confidentiality**

Members of staff will maintain the child's confidentiality, as this obviously is an important part of relationships. If, however, the teacher or visitor feels that the child is at risk or in danger then discussion with the Headteacher must take place. The child will be told of the need for the breach of confidentiality and supported by the member of staff.

We will follow our Child Protection Policy.

### **Sensitive Issues**

We appreciate that government approaches to certain topics such as Aids, Family Planning, Abortion, Divorce and Homosexuality may conflict with the church's teaching. We aim to help our children to perceive value or lack of value in what they see or hear.

It is appreciated that the individual children will ask explicit or difficult questions in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered

immediately and can be addressed privately at another time. We believe that the teacher must use skill and be sensitive to the age, understanding and personal circumstances of each individual. They must refer to the Head teacher if they are unsure of the school's position.

### **Specific issues**

Teachers will work within the school's policy.

Both boys and girls need to be prepared for puberty so that they will be able to manage the physical and emotional changes. Programmes should include preparing girls for the onset of menstruation and schools should make arrangements to help girls with menstruation and with requests for sanitary protection.

We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help pupils to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the school serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

### **Visitors**

There are a number of people who may become involved with this programme. These people may include parents, school nurse, religious or health professionals. The school nurse may be able to add an extra dimension to this area of the curricular. Staff will work closely and sensitively with all involved in the children's education in sexuality.

### **Dissemination of this policy**

Members of the teaching staff, parents and the Governing Body will be able to access a copy of this policy via the school website.

All staff (including teachers, ancillary staff, physiotherapists, nurses and carers) will be made aware of and follow the school's SRE policy.

### **Procedures for monitoring and evaluation**

The policy will be reviewed regularly using a consultative process, which identifies teachers', pupils and parents feedback on the Sex Education Programme.

A short summary will be included in the school prospectus and on the school website.

**November 2015**