



## Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with students and their parents, set out their intentions about RSHE. Whilst RSHE is recognised as being a sensitive issue for both parents and teachers, the media have no such qualms about handling sexual material. Young people absorb much of their knowledge and many of their attitudes from what they see on the television, read in magazines or view on the internet. Many of these attitudes and the sort of advice they give, run directly counter to what is in the best interests of young people and are in conflict with Christian values and teaching.

We set out our rationale for, and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

### **In putting this policy together, we have undertaken the following.**

- gathered information from the school parliament and other student focus groups
- review of RSHE curriculum content with staff
- consultation with wider school community e.g. school nurse
- consultation with school governors

## DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

The DfE guidance states that “children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way”<sup>1</sup>. It is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of her or 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. In primary schools the focus should be on “teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.”<sup>2</sup> This would include the topics of families and the people of who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe. Students starting at Richard Challoner school in Year 7 will already have experienced this approach. In Secondary schools RSE should “give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of

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<sup>1</sup> Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 4

<sup>2</sup> Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 19

# Richard Challoner School

## Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

### Policy Date: June 2021



committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).”<sup>3</sup>

#### STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSHE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSHE go further than this.

#### RATIONALE

‘I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL’ (Jn.10.10)

We are involved in relationships, sex and health education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSHE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church’s teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity; Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God, gender and sexuality are seen as God’s gift, reflect God’s beauty, and share in the divine creativity. RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE (and the Welsh Assembly Government) RSHE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of students. It is centred on Christ’s vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated. This work will be supported by both the RE department and the Science department and a mapping exercise will be undertaken at the time of each policy review to determine if the coverage of RSE is meeting the needs of our students.

All RSHE will be in accordance with the Church’s moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all students have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from. It will also prepare students for life in modern Britain.

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<sup>3</sup> Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 25



### VALUES AND VIRTUES

Our programme enshrines Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to the God's call to love others with a proper respect.

for their dignity and the dignity of the human body. The following virtues will be explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

### AIM OF RSHE AND THE MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSHE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, we will endeavour to raise students' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that we commit ourselves, in partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a "positive and prudent sexual education"<sup>4</sup> which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

#### Philosophy

To enable students to develop a healthy, balanced, well-informed attitude towards relationships, personal development and sexuality. To this end, our policy is one of providing the necessary information, reflecting the best principles of education in accordance with Christian values, rather than a form of indoctrination.

#### **Objectives**

To develop the following **attitudes and virtues**:

- reverence for the gift of human sexuality and fertility;
- respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others;
- joy in the goodness of the created world and their own bodily natures;
- responsibility for their own actions and a recognition of the impact of these on others;
- recognising and valuing their own sexual identity and that of others;
- celebrating the gift of life-long, self-giving love;
- recognising the importance of marriage and family life;
- fidelity in relationships.

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<sup>4</sup> Gravissimum Educationis



To develop the following **personal and social skills**:

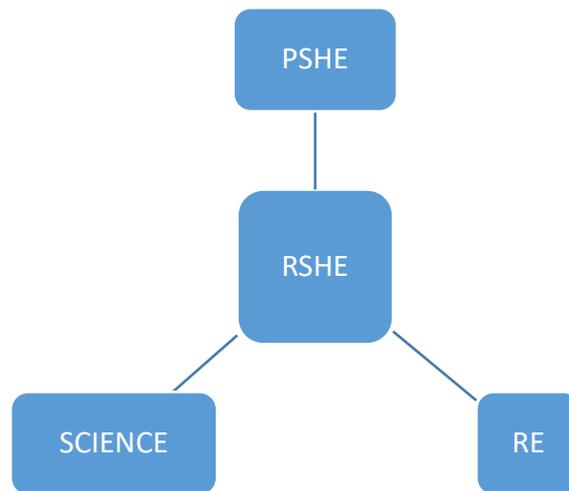
- making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity, and which are respectful of the individual's commitments;
- loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships and loving, stable relationships free from exploitation, abuse and bullying;
- managing emotions within relationships, and when relationships break down, with confidence, sensitivity and dignity;
- managing conflict positively, recognising the value of difference;
- cultivating humility, mercy and compassion, learning to forgive and be forgiven;
- developing self-esteem and confidence, demonstrating self-respect and empathy for others;
- building resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups and so developing the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately;
- being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

To **know and understand**:

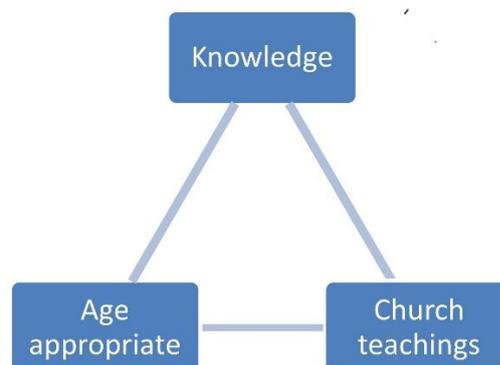
- the Church's teaching on relationships and the nature and meaning of sexual love;
- the Church's teaching on marriage and the importance of marriage and family life;
- the centrality and importance of virtue in guiding human living and loving;
- the physical and psychological changes that accompany puberty;
- the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation;
- how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.



In all of this we are underpinning our work based on the following central model of delivery:



Furthermore, we will do so considering the following three areas, which will help us determine what to teach and when to teach it, through a planned and considered program of RSHE.





## **INCLUSION AND DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING**

We will ensure RSHE is sensitive to the different needs of individual students in respect to students' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject students to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help.

## **EQUALITIES OBLIGATIONS**

The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the students, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked-after children.

## **BROAD CONTENT OF RSE**

Three aspects of RSE - attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills will be explored via a spiral curriculum throughout a student's time at the school.

## **PROGRAMME / RESOURCES**

A map of the content of the RSHE programme can be accessed using the link below:

<https://www.richardchalloner.com/rshe>

## **PARENTS, CARERS AND STUDENTS**

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Therefore, the school will support parents and carers by providing access to material that could be shared with their children at home, and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more wherever possible. Parents/carers will be informed by Parentmail when the more sensitive aspects of RSHE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents and students have not been able to be involved in the planning of the new RSHE programme due to the impact of the recent COVID-19 pandemic. However, our school parliament, as well as student working parties on racial discrimination and gender equality, will have the opportunity



review, comment and inform us on how our RSHE program is working and this will allow us to respond, where appropriate, when we conduct future mapping exercises of its content.

We will also invite parents to comment on our RSHE policy and programme and where necessary parents will be given the opportunity to talk with the RSHE co-ordinator to discuss any issues they might have. Our aim is that, as our RSHE programme evolves, every student, parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSHE programme to meet each individual's needs.

Parents continue to have **the right to withdraw** their children from Sex Education, except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher in the first instance. It is hoped that should a parent have any concerns with the RSHE program that they would enter into a dialogue with the school as to what those concerns were and allow the school to potentially address these concerns. Where possible the school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning if they do choose to withdraw them from elements of the RSE program.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed and hope that parents would agree with us and recognise the support that it is being offered. For further information, please refer to the DfE guidance Page 17 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)<sup>5</sup>.

### BALANCED CURRICULUM

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSHE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues.

Students will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSHE (in secondary schools/academies relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with our school's promotion of Catholic teaching. We will ensure that students have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

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<sup>5</sup> [RSE Guidance Booklet DfE](#)



## RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING THE PROGRAMME

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lies with the members of staff coordinating the delivery of the PSHE/RSHE/RE/Science Curriculums and the Deputy Head responsible for coordinating the whole program.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSHE programme. They will be role models for students of good, healthy, wholesome relationships in the way they conduct themselves in terms of the relationships that exist between staff, other adults and students. They will also be contributing to the development of students' personal and social skills.

### **External Visitors**

Our school will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSHE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'<sup>6</sup>.

Health professionals will follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments, and using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching considers Catholic principles and practice. All visitors should always have a member of the school staff with them when delivering material to monitor and, if needs be, intervene if the material involved is not what has been previously agreed.

## OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSHE

### **Governors**

- will monitor the RSHE policy through the Curriculum Committee;
- ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g., SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs;
- ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children;
- establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used;
- ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSHE within PSHE.

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<sup>6</sup> [CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools](#)

# Richard Challoner School

## Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Policy Date: June 2021



### **Head teacher**

The Head teacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, the Diocesan Schools' Service and the Local Education Authority, also appropriate agencies.

### **PSHE/RSHE Co-Ordinators**

The PSHE co-ordinators with the deputy headteacher i.c. RSHE and head teacher have a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSHE and the provision of in-service training.

### **All Staff**

RSHE is a whole school issue. All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their students. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE. All staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND CURRICULUM SUBJECTS**

This RSHE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Anti-Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc)

Students with particular difficulties whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of students.

Learning about RSHE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the biannual RSHE audit.

## **STUDENT'S QUESTIONS**

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSHE can take place. They want to ensure that students can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people.



### **Controversial or Sensitive issues**

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSHE. These may be matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSHE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and students, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child or young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

### **SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE AT RISK**

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSHE takes place. Effective RSHE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their students and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a child or young person is a victim of or is at risk of abuse they are required to follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE**

All governors, all teachers, all support staff, all parents and all students must be made aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality.

All lessons, especially those in the RSHE programme, will have the best interests of students at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Students will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help students facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to students that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head teacher, but that the students would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken



## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The RSHE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and by visiting classrooms/year groups during the delivery of topics. The programme will be evaluated biannually by governors, key staff and student focus groups. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

**Policy Review Date:** June, 2022

**Policy Cycle:** Annual