



# Archbishop Beck Catholic College

Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)  
Policy

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE). We set out our rationale for and approach to relationships and sex education in the school.

## **FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

At Archbishop Beck Catholic College, we seek to provide an education which meets the needs of the students and provides them with the skill set needed to make the choices that will give them a content, safe, healthy and positive life beyond their days at the college.

RSE requires us to explore the emotional, social and physical aspects of getting older, being in and having relationships, engaging in and being respectful of sex and learning about human sexuality and sexual health.

At Archbishop Beck Catholic College, RSE is a part of a wider programme of individual education, taught across the whole curriculum as well as an identifiable part of the Personal Development curriculum, which encompasses the statutory PSHE curriculum.

The following process was undertaken to produce our RSE policy:

- Auditing where RSE is identifiable across the college curriculum and college daily life
- the Head of RE attending INSET at Archdiocesan level
- a sub-committee being formed to produce the policy
- a link governor identified to report back to the governing body

Review by and adoption by the full governing body was given in January 2020 with an agreement that the policy would be subject to review on an annual basis and audited on a regular basis.

## **DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION**

The DFE guidance defines RSE 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 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. The DFE identifies three main elements: “attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding”.

## **STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

**Through the Relationships and Sex Education Curriculum we will:**

- Meet the statutory guidance for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019.
- Provide high quality teaching and learning which is inclusive, appropriately adapted using adaptive teaching techniques and which responds to the needs of all students in order to enable them to achieve.
- Equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to make well informed decisions about their lives.
- Inform and support students through their sexual, moral, emotional and health development with the intention of promoting well informed choices.

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We ensure that RSE within the Archbishop Beck Catholic College curriculum meets the requirements as outlined in the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DFES, 2019); Not Yet Good Enough (OFSTED, 2012), A Model Catholic Secondary RSE Curriculum (CES 2016) and Sex and Relationships Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Brook, PSHE Association, Sex Education Forum, 2014) to ensure that RSE is taught in the context of current relevant legislation including the Equality Act (2010) and the Children Act (2004). However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

## **RATIONALE**

At Archbishop Beck Catholic College, the curriculum allows for RSE to be taught across college departments, at specific times throughout the year through Personal Development days (x3 per year) and Personal Development lessons 1 per week Yr 7+8, 1 per week Y11, special assemblies and also falling under the remit of non-teaching staff and external visitors where appropriate.

Specific strands of RSE can also be found in RE and science as well as through team sports. Respect for the individual, each other, sexual development and behaviour form a part of the college's moral framework, emphasising the values of self and family life. Students are made aware of the need to be self-restraining, dignified and respectful of themselves and those around them "doing unto others as you would have them do unto you." (Mark 12:28-29) to avoid negative emotional, moral and physical risks of promiscuous behaviour. As a Catholic college we emphasise the benefits of Planned Parenthood within a stable married relationship. The 1996 Education Act, s403 and the Relationships and Sex Education Guidance document, July 2000 contain requirements for all colleges regarding sex education provision.

Our Christian identity means that we are led to a value of our own worth and giftedness. As well as recognising our own worth, we respect others with differing cultures, religions and backgrounds through RSE across the college.

There is no one for whom RSE would be irrelevant since it deals with every area of life and its chief aims are to assist students to a realisation of their own gifts and consequently a respect and acceptance of other people and their uniqueness. RSE therefore addresses all students in our classrooms.

RSE should enable the students to develop a reflective attitude, which will allow them to explore the story and vision of themselves and the community in which they live, from its local to global responsibilities. RSE seeks to make a contribution to the development of personal beliefs and values, self-worth and personal community responsibilities.

## **AIM OF RSE 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 RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, we will endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes.

"We expect all Catholic schools to ensure that space is made in the curriculum for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). The content of what is taught must express the teaching of the Church, and should be delivered to suit the age of the children or young

people to whom it is addressed. We all need to recognise that without providing an education in this area, we leave many young people vulnerable to receiving their education second-hand, and often from sources which damage them and their capacity to love.”  
('Learning to Love' Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2017)

## **Objectives**

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 explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

### **Through RSE we will seek:**

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.

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.

## **PARENTS AND CARERS**

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.

Parents were consulted before this policy was ratified by the governors. Consultation was had at stages of the development of the RSE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. Overview of resources and content used by the college in the RSE programme is made available on request. Through this consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in the college's RSE programme meeting their child's needs.

Parents have *the right to withdraw* their children from RSE except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum science orders.

Parents wishing to withdraw their children must notify the college of their intention to do so, by contacting the head teacher. Parents will then be supported by the college to provide materials, which can be used to help their child/children with their provision of the topic and learning.

## **BALANCED CURRICULUM**

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE. 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 pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

RSE at Archbishop Beck Catholic College seeks to ensure that:

- All students are led to value of their own worth and giftedness.
- All students recognise their own worth, so as to respect others with differing cultures, religions and backgrounds.
- All students become closer to the image and likeness of God through their loving relationships with others.
- Catholic RSE is taught in partnership with parents.
- All students' identify themselves as a child of God - created chosen and loved by God.
- Our curriculum can change hearts and minds.
- Our curriculum is an education in virtue.
- Our curriculum is an education in conscience.
- Relationship Education is about striving for the Common Good.
- The saying of prayer and receiving of Sacraments fuels our teaching.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE**

All those involved in the implementation of, development of and teaching of RSE must be aware of this element of the policy, in relation to the issue of advice and confidentiality.

The RSE programme, has the best interests of students at heart, growing their knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, growing in personal and social skills and recognising the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Students and teachers and those involved in the delivery of the programme will, by the very nature of the content sometimes talk and discuss some challenging topics. Staff will help students to explore these topics in a way that will be age appropriate and in line with the college's pastoral care policy.

Students will be made aware by staff that following disclosure of information by a student to an adult, unconditional confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, in matters for example, which are illegal or abusive. Explanation will then be given to student that in this situation the disclosure will have to be passed onto somebody else such as the safeguarding lead or the head teacher. When this happens the student will be informed first that this course of action is going to be taken.

## **THEMES COVERED IN RSE**

### **Equality, Sexual harassment and Violence:**

- To understand the importance of gender equality and the power of language.
- To understand what is considered sexism, sexual harassment and sexual violence including sexual comments, remarks, jokes, taunting, 'banter', physical behaviour, online sexual harassment.
- To understand that sexual harassment and violence can happen to any one of any age and gender in any setting.
- To understand why as a school and society we do not tolerate sexism, sexual harassment and violence.
- To recognise unsafe behaviour and attitudes relating to gender, sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- To recognise their responsibility to challenge and report sexism, sexual harassment and violence.

### **Consent:**

- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).

### **Families:**

- That there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.

- What marriage is, including its legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
- The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to the raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

### **Respectful relationships, including friendships:**

- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

### **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health:**

- How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- The facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.
- Strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- Choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, and where to get further help.

- How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted and the importance of and facts about testing.
- The prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

### **Online and media:**

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- The impact of viewing harmful content.
- That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

### **The Law:**

Students are informed about the law surrounding RSE topics including:

- Marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

### **Mental wellbeing**

Pupils should know:

- how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- that happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).



- how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.

### **Internet safety and harms**

Pupils should know:

- the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image)
- how people may curate a specific image of their life online
- over-reliance on online relationships including social media
- the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt
- how advertising and information is targeted at them
- how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
- how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

### **Physical health and fitness**

Pupils should know:

- the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health.
- about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

### **Healthy eating**

Pupils should know:

- how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

### **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco**

Pupils should know:

- the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.
- the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
- the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
- the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
- awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.

### **Health and prevention:**

Pupils should know

- about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.

- the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- Basic first aid Pupils should know
- basic treatment for common injuries.
- life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.15
- the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

**Changing adolescent body:**

Pupils should know:

- key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
- the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The RSE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of students work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires, response sheets, assessments given to students, and by discussion with students, staff and parents. A parent survey will be given as part of this review during Academic Review Day each year.

Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

Key staff	Mr I Daly, Mrs M Higgins
Link Governors	Mrs A Woodward, Mrs J Lesbirel