



# Archdiocese of Liverpool

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

**2025-26**

<b>Chair of Governors</b>	<b>Dr John Brennan</b>
<b>Headteacher</b>	<b>Claire McKinnon</b>
<b>Subject Leader</b>	<b>Cheryl Wallace</b>
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## **'Nurturing Hearts and Minds'**



### **Rationale**

'I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL'

(Jn.10.10)

We are involved in Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) 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. RSHE, 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/RSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. 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.

All Relationship, Sex and Health Education (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 pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

### **Aim**

St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School aims to provide a suitable programme that follows the statutory need to include RSHE into their curriculum from September 2020 which meets the ethos of its Catholic identity and mission.

The purpose of this Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) policy is to set out the ways in which the school's provision supports pupils through their spiritual, moral, social, emotional and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life growing up in today's world.

Our School's mission embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people, and through an agreed approach to Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) using the Archdiocesan recommended resource 'Journey In' Love (2020 edition) we believe that we can promote the development of the whole child, so that children can grow in *virtue, wisdom and stature*,

understanding both the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing spiritually, as well as moral aspects of relationships within a context of a Christian vision for the purpose of life.

**In partnership with parents, we aim:**

To encourage pupils' growth in respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others; acknowledging we are all created in the image and likeness of God.

To help pupils develop an understanding that loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships, is central to stable relationships.

To help pupils to understand the nature of relationships and to encourage them to reflect on their own relationships and respect and value differences between people.

To develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence in talking, listening and thinking about their feelings and managing their emotions within relationships including when relationships break down.

To help pupils acquire the skills necessary to develop and sustain relationships.

To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty by understanding the physical and psychological changes that occur.

To offer a sexual education in the wider context of relationships.

To ensure that pupils protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed. To help pupils to develop a healthier, safer lifestyle where they have resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups.

To prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom/reign of God.

**The Purpose**

The aims of Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) at St Mary Magdalen's are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Help pupils develop feelings of dignity, self-worth, self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

**Statutory Requirements**

At St. Mary Magdalen's, we understand that pupils must be provided with an education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. A key part of this relates to Relationships Education, which must be delivered to every primary-aged pupil, as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

In teaching Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) we must have regard to Catholic Education Service guidance issued by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales 2017.

The statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996 Appendix A

The statutory guidance from the Department for Education Equality Act 2010.

The other aspects of the Statutory curriculum intent will be met using resources from the PSHE Association, Common Sense Education for Online Safety and by participating as a whole school in the national Anti-Bullying Week, Safer Internet Day and Railway / Water Safety (See **Appendices 1 & 2** at end of document which incorporates DFE Statutory Relationships and Statutory Science)

### **Policy Development**

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – Cheryl Wallace (Assistant Headteacher, RSHE and RE Subject Leader) worked in collaboration with Claire McKinnon (Headteacher and current PSHE Subject Leader) and Pat Peel (Archdiocese) to review the RSHE content, taking relevant national and local guidance into consideration.
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to take part in consultation.
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their Relationship, Sex and Health Education, speaking to pupils within the juniors. (pupil questionnaire)
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

### **Definition**

Relationship, Sex and Health Education involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues underpinned by our Catholic values.

Relationship Sex and Health Education is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about personal relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

Health education focusses on equipping pupils with the knowledge they need to make good and safe decisions about their own health and their mental health and wellbeing. This also involves a focus on recognising the link between the two and being able to make healthy lifestyle choices.

### **Curriculum**

We have developed our curriculum with recommendations from the Archdiocesan Education Department to ensure that they meet with Catholic Church teaching.

After consultation with parents Relationship Sex Education will be covered using the Archdiocesan recommended resource 'Journey in Love' 2020 this includes \*sexual intercourse at Year 6 – taught by the Year 6 class teacher. (See right of withdrawal)

We have considered the age, stage and feelings of pupils and have consulted with parents and staff to ensure we are offering a quality curriculum which is adequately catered to meet their needs.

We have adapted the, the PSHE Association Primary Scheme of Work and Primary toolkit to produce a rich and appropriate RSHE curriculum. This also includes making the content relevant and appropriate for pupils with SEND (see PSHE Policy).

If pupils ask questions outside the scope of our curriculum, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online. Within the Journey in Love Programme, there is a section with answers to Frequently Asked Questions from children (Years 5 and 6). This explores the themes from a Catholic perspective.

### **Delivery of Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)**

Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is taught both discretely and within the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum lessons. Some aspects of the RSHE curriculum may be touched upon in other lessons as it shares links with Religious Education, Science, Online Safety and Physical Education.

Our RSHE will ensure that content is relevant to the age, experience and maturity of pupils.

The statutory guidance for Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me.
- Caring friendships.
- Respectful relationships.
- Online relationships.
- Being safe.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of 'family life'. Teaching about families is part of PSHE and we aim to reflect the broad range of experiences amongst pupils and ensure that all pupils feel their family is valued. Pupils will learn to recognise and respect that there are different types of families such as: married or single parent families; divorced parents; parents who are not married; same sex couples; children living between two homes; families headed by grandparents; adoptive parents; foster parents/carers amongst other structures, along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a support structure around them (for example: looked after children or young carers). Staff will emphasise the importance of strong and supportive relationships. Staff will acknowledge that people are all different and that they are made in the image and likeness of God. Staff will also acknowledge that all relationships are founded on love, dignity, tolerance and respect.

### **Equal Opportunities**

As a school, we promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Our school environment uniformly applies values of inclusion and respect to all pupils and their families. All staff are proactive in promoting positive relationships and receive regular training.

All pupils have access to the RSHE curriculum. Where pupils have specific educational needs, arrangements for support from outside agencies and support staff are made to ensure these pupils have an appropriate, differentiated curriculum.

### **Roles and Responsibility**

#### **The Governing Body**

The governing body will approve the RSHE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

#### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from the non-statutory element of Relationship and Sex Education in Year 6\* (see right of withdrawal)

### **Staff**

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE as this forms part of the Teaching Standards. Any staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way which complies with Church teaching.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE.
- Monitoring progress.
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE.

Members of staff responsible for teaching RSHE and PSHE will receive training on a regular basis during Staff Meetings or directed time (using the DFE training modules and content from the Archdiocese), led by the different Subject Leaders, to ensure that they are fully equipped to teach the subjects effectively. Staff will also be updated in light of new national developments.

### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with dignity, respect and sensitivity.

### **Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory component of sex education in Year 6. This is where sexual intercourse is taught discretely as part of the Physical aspect within 'Journey In Love' the Archdiocesan recommended resource.

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from RSHE.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Statutory Relationships Education as set out in the DFE guidance 2020.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by Mrs McKinnon and Mrs Wallace by undertaking Pupil Book Study and discussion with staff in Staff Meeting time.

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal informal assessment systems.

This policy will be agreed annually by the governors and reviewed every three years.

This policy will also be reviewed in light of any changes to statutory guidance, feedback from parents, staff or pupils, and issues in the school or local area that may need addressing.

Parents will be consulted before any proposed changes.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff, parents and, where necessary, pupils.

**Resources for all year groups**

**Journey in Love 2020**

**The PSHE Association** [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)

**Common Sense Education - Internet Safety Resources**

**Knowsley Online Safety Information for pupils and parents**

**Picture News**

**Visits within the local Faith Community**

**NSPCC – Speak out, Stay Safe/The Underwear PANTS Rule** [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

**CEOP – National Crime Agency Command**

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

## Appendix 1

### **Primary Relationships Education Statutory Learning Opportunities**

#### **Families and people who care for me**

That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care
That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong
How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

#### **Caring friendships**

How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends
The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right
How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

#### **Respectful relationships**

The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
The conventions of courtesy and manners
The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
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 those in positions of authority
About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive
The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults

#### **Online relationships**

That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
How information and data is shared and used online

### **Being safe**

What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe
That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard
How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
Where to get advice from e.g. family, school and/or other sources

### **Mental wellbeing**

That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
That there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings
How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness
Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support
That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing
Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online)
It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough

### **Internet safety and harms**

That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits
About the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing
How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted
That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health
How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted
Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online

### **Physical health and fitness**

The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle
The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise

The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity)
How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health

### **Healthy eating**

What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content)
The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals
The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health)

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

The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking
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### **Health and prevention**

How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body
About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer
The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn
About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist
About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing
The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination

### **Basic first aid**

How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary
Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries

### **Changing adolescent body**

Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes
About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle

## **Appendix 2**

### **Statutory Science Curriculum**

Early Years Foundation Stage children learn about life cycles. Through on-going personal, social and emotional development they develop the skills to form relationships and think about relationships with others.

#### **In Key Stage 1 children learn:**

- That animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and use their senses and reproduce
- To recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans
- That humans and animals can reproduce offspring and these grow into adults
- To recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others
- To treat others with sensitivity

#### **In Key Stage 2 children learn:**

- That the life processes common to humans and other animals including nutrition, growth and reproduction
- About the main stages of the human life cycle