



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY



ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, A VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY
JANUARY 2025



St. Alban's Mission Statement.
Love, learn, share and respect in the light of Jesus.

Our Aims:

- We will create a caring Catholic community in which all members can grow in love, trust and respect for one another.
- We will ensure that each member of our Catholic school community feels special as a child of God.
- We will celebrate our differences and similarities.
- We will help each other to develop our particular talents.
- We will communicate clearly and honestly with each other.
- We will create a sense of belonging between our school, our Church and our families.

Introduction

In this policy, the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out intentions about sex and relationships education (RSHE). We set out our rationale for and approach to sex and relationships education in our school. Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in a Catholic school must be rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching about what it is to be truly human in Christ, what it means to live well in relationship with others and be presented within a positive framework of Christian virtue. For this reason, we speak about Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) rather than Sex and Relationship Education (SRE), since this emphasises the importance of healthy relationships to human well-being, as the core learning within an RSHE curriculum.

Consultation

This policy has been developed through consultation with parents, staff, pupils and governors.

Implementation and Review of Policy

This policy was implemented from September 2021 and will be reviewed annually by the Head teacher, RSHE Lead, the Governing Body and Staff. The next review date is January 2026. We will continue to ensure that we work with parents in our reviews.

Dissemination

The policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents via our website and paper copies are available, on request. Details of the content of our RSHE curriculum will also be published on our website and parents are also able to view our RSE curriculum via a parent portal.

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"¹. 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"².

¹ Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, DfEE, 2000 ² *ibid*

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

The Department for Education states that 'The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools

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

RATIONALE

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

(John 10:10)

We are involved in relationships and sex 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. 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, 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 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 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 and support will be provided to help pupils deal with different sets of values.

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 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.

AIM OF RSHE AND OUR 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. In keeping with our Mission statement, 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. 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”³ which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

Objectives

To develop the following attitudes and virtues:

- ✓ *having reverence for the gift of human sexuality and fertility;*
- ✓ *having respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others;*
- ✓ *having joy in the goodness of the created world and their own bodily natures;*
- ✓ *having 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;*
- ✓ *having 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 having 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.*

³ Gravissimum Educationis 1

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.*
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Outcomes

INCLUSION AND DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING

We will ensure RSHE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and we will ensure that is taught in a way that does not subject pupils 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 pupils, 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 RSHE

Three aspects of RSHE - attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills will be provided in three inter-related ways: the whole school / ethos dimension; a cross-curricular dimension and a specific relationships and sex curriculum.

At St Alban's, we follow the "Life to the Full" programme, using the Shrewsbury Diocese "Guidance for Primary on the use of the RSHE Programme, Life to the Full" (Appendix C). This scheme allows teachers to implement all of the statutory elements of the RSHE and the PSHE elements that support the mental health and well-being of our pupils. British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, respect and tolerance underpin our school's Catholic ethos of following the Gospel values.

In "Life to the Full, we follow a four stage structure, which is repeated across four different learning stages:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception)
- Key Stage One (Year One and Year Two)
- Lower Key Stage Two (Year Three and Year Four)
- Upper Key stage Two (Year Five and Year Six)

Within each learning stage, there are three modules, which are based on the Model Catholic RSHE Curriculum:

- Created and loved by God
- Created to love Others
- Created to live in a Community

Each module is then broken down into units of work.

(Appendix B provides further information about the programme, "Life to the Full")

Teaching strategies will include:

- ✓ *establishing ground rules*
- ✓ *distancing techniques*
- ✓ *discussion*
- ✓ *project learning*
- ✓ *reflection*
- ✓ *active*
- ✓ *brainstorming*

- group work
- role-play

Assessment will be ongoing, using strategies including discussion and reflection activities.

Life to the Full

Module 1	Created and Loved by God
Units	Religious Understanding Me, My Body, My Health Emotional Well-being Life Cycles
Module 2	Created to Love Others
Units	Religious Understanding Personal Relationships Keeping Safe
Module 3	Created to Live in a Community
Units	Religious Understanding Living in the Wider World

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. Therefore, our school will support parents and carers by providing material to be shared with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more. Parents/carers will be informed by parentmail when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered, in order to be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents will be consulted at every stage of the development of the RSHE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. They will be able to view the resources used by our school in the RSHE programme. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in our school's RSHE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE. Should parents wish to withdraw their child, they are asked to notify the school in writing by contacting the Head teacher. School will ensure support by providing material for parents to help their child with their learning.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

The Headteacher will grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is our responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. (DfE, June 2019)

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 RSHE 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 RSHE. 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.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING THE PROGRAMME

Class teachers have responsibility for teaching this programme. However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSHE programme. They will be role models for pupils of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and pupils. They will also be contributing to the development of pupils' 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.

In line with CES guidance 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools'⁴, external visitors can expect

- a welcome, acknowledging their expertise and the enrichment it will provide for students;
- informative, supportive and cooperative relationships through a working agreement.

School expects the teaching and activities to be

- beneficial to pupils;
- consistent with Gospel Values and the teaching of the Catholic Church;
- consistent with the school's Mission Statement, goals, aims and objectives;
- built on mutual trust, respect and appreciation of each other.

Health professionals should follow our school's policies, minimising the potential for inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSHE

Governors

- ✓ *Draw up the RSHE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers;*
- ✓ *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 RSE within PSHE.*

Headteacher

The Headteacher 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 and any other appropriate agencies.

RSHE Lead

The RSHE Lead, with the Headteacher, has 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

⁴ Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools, CES, Feb. 201

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 pupils. Teachers will be expected to teach RSHE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSHE. All staff have been included in the development of this policy and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND CURRICULUM SUBJECTS

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of our curriculum framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with other related school policy documents.

Where required, pupils will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted accordingly to meet varying needs.

CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS

Our aim is to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSHE can take place. We want to ensure that pupils 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. We 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 pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

Some questions may raise issues which would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time.

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 pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils 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.

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

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The RSHE Lead will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated regularly by means of assessments, feedback and discussion with pupils, staff and parents. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

CONTEXT

This policy is the outcome of a parental consultation and series of discussions involving teachers and governors, whose brief was to discuss the requirements of a RSHE programme, specific to St Alban's. At St Alban's, we recognise parents and carers as children's first educators and that any teaching we undertake should be complementary and supportive to the role of the parents.

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know

- 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 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

Pupils should know

- 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

Pupils should know

- 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

*Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

- 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

Pupils should know

- 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

Pupils should know

- 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 e.g. family, school and/or other sources.