



# **The John Fisher School**

## **Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) Policy**

**Responsible:** Governors' SLAW Committee

**Next Review Date:** May 2019

Nurturing young Catholic gentlemen  
Aspiring for Academic, Cultural & Sporting Excellence

*'We must protect our children from ignorance. They should be given all necessary information and correct answers to their questions. Within the Christian community there is a real need to give gradual and positive sex education to our children. Each school, in consultation with governors, teachers and parents, should have or build a developmental programme which aims to help our young people to have a properly formed conscience, to enable them to make right judgements, and to take the right actions in the many and varied situations in which they may find themselves.'*

*Extracts From Bishops' Conference - 1987  
Laying the Foundations for Education in Personal Relationships*

## **1 Rationale**

As a Catholic School we understand that all our pupils are of intrinsic and absolute value as they are created by God and in the image of God. With this at the centre of all our teaching, and in particular our Sex and Relationship Education (SRE), we aim to make our teaching holistic and fitting to the needs of the pupils.

## **Church Teaching**

The SRE programme is underpinned by the following Church teachings:

- ☒ The dignity and worth of each person made in the image of God.
- ☒ The importance of individuals coming together in mutual support and regard, to live and work for the good of humankind and the glory of God.

## **2 Statutory Requirements**

Statutory requirements for sex education are set out in the DfE's guidance booklet entitled 'Sex and Relationships Education'. The law requires that maintained secondary schools teach sex education, human growth and reproduction, including education about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.

## **3 Aims**

SRE aims to meet these requirements while also encouraging pupils to consider the views of the Roman Catholic Church and the value of the human person.

The key aim of the programme is to provide a teaching that is founded on Roman Catholic understanding of the human person and an appreciation that authentic human love is more than sexual expression, for the human person is made in the image and likeness of God and this dignity is inalienable.

To achieve these aims, this school incorporates in its general curriculum appropriate teaching on matters of human love, the functions of the body and an understanding of God's creative love as embodied in human reproduction, at a level suitable to the growing child at various stages of development. A significant principle in this teaching finds its fullest and most appropriate expression inside marriage. Sex education as such is not a subject in itself on the curriculum. However, there will be from time to time, specific classes devoted to various aspects of sex education in a variety of subjects.

Moral teaching on relationships and sexual behaviour will be covered from the Catholic point of view, showing sensitivity to other loving relationships. The R.E. department may take special initiatives in this area, in liaison with such areas as PSHE, Science and Physical Education.

Questions will arise in a wide variety of topics. Teachers are asked to answer questions honestly, taking care that, especially in the case of younger pupils, answers are simple and straightforward and do not give rise to confusion or anxiety. All pupils will be encouraged to refer to their parents for further information and, should it be thought necessary by the Headteacher, parents may be contacted.

## **4 Approach**

By its very nature education in sex & relationships is cross-curricular and all staff should be mindful of the need to promote positive attitudes when issues, involving moral and social values, arise. Similarly, as education in sexuality is but a part of education in relationships, pupils should experience a school climate in which the quality of relationships between staff and themselves is marked by honesty, warmth, mutual respect, trust and security.

However, some subjects will have a key role to play in the Sex Education provided at the school. These subjects are Religious Education, Science, Physical Education and PSHE. This is reflected in the summary outline of the content, at each key stage, of our Sex Education programme. Outside agencies and speakers are invited to address specific areas in which they have a particular expertise. Care is taken to ensure that outside agencies recognise the Catholic nature of the school.

In delivering SRE it is important to recognise that:

☒ We, as a Catholic community, consider one of the greatest services we can offer our pupils is to help them form happy, lasting and fulfilling personal relationships.

☒ We hope to do this in partnership with the parents and ideally we do. But experience indicates that for many reasons some parents find it difficult to help their own children in certain areas. For some of the pupils we are the only people who will ever give them direct, honest, unbiased and sound advice – and these are very often the pupils most in need of such advice.

☒ This type of education calls for great prudence, sensitivity and respect for the pupils themselves. Sometimes we will make mistakes but we do not feel it right to shirk our responsibilities just because we cannot guarantee meeting everyone's needs perfectly.

☒ One major challenge we face is that in any group with whom we might be dealing there will be a wide range of knowledge, experience and outlook. Young people in the same age range vary enormously in their emotional, moral and religious development. Their family backgrounds and upbringing are very different.

☒ The Christian values we teach them can bring them joy, freedom from many worries, and ultimately will help them form true, lasting and deeply happy relationships.

☒ We believe we are serving our pupils by showing them how to live out Christ's call to 'love one another'.

## **5 Principles**

☒ We are all made in the image of God. God is love – so our vocation is to love as Christ has taught us.

☒ Our bodies, our emotions, our sexual identity are primarily good.

☒ The keys to any worthwhile relationship are honesty and good communication.

☒ We should only completely give ourselves bodily to the person we completely love.

☒ Marriage is therefore the most appropriate relationship for the full use of the gift of sexuality.

☒ It is important to acknowledge to the pupils that we are all human and therefore make mistakes; and that God is quicker to forgive us than we are ourselves.

## **6 Monitoring**

Responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy lies with the Governors of the School and the Headteacher.

Information to inform monitoring and review includes:

☒ Lesson observations

☒ Student feedback questionnaire conducted after the PHSE lessons; this feedback feeds into the planning of future PHSE sessions

☒ Feedback from the School Council

☒ Tutor feedback to the PHSE co-coordinator about the sex and relationship content of the programme

☒ Review meeting of those involved in delivering the courses at the end of the year.