

# St. Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy



## RSE Policy

Policy updated: September 2023

Policy Review: September 2024

Signed by:

Chair of Governors

## **1. Context**

*'We should be shining lamps, giving light to all around us'*  
(Venerable Catherine McAuley)

This policy has been developed by governors and teachers, in partnership with parents and pupils, taking into consideration our Mercy ethos and local and national policy and guidance. We set out our rationale for, and approach to, relationships and sex education (RSE) in the academy.

## **2. Aims**

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>

The aims of relationships and sex education at our academy are to:

- Provide a forum for students to discuss sensitive topics;
- Prepare pupils for stable and loving relationships, puberty, sexual development and the importance of physical, mental and sexual health;
- Prepare pupils as individuals and members of society, and give opportunities to reflect on their experiences and personal development;
- Support pupils to develop their physical, moral and emotional development;
- Support pupils with self respect, confidence and empathy, as well as practical knowledge and skills to help them live healthy, happy lives.

## **3. Statutory Requirements**

As a secondary academy, we are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. We must also provide RSE to all pupils (up to the age of 16) as per Section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017 (Section 34).

## **4. Definition and Rationale**

RSE is about the spiritual, emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, including learning about relationships, puberty, sexual development, physical, mental and sexual health, sexuality and equality and diversity.

*'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 RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic

Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

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<sup>1</sup> Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory Guidance, page 4

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) RSE 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 centered 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 RSE 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.

### 5. Curriculum

RSE is taught through our PSHE curriculum in Years 7-11 and through our General RE lessons in Years 12-13, but also during assemblies and tutor time. Some aspects of RSE are also covered in our Science curriculum.

The RSE curriculum has been carefully planned to ensure it is sensitive, age appropriate and rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church. We follow the RSE resources created by 'Ten Ten'; a Catholic education organisation that has been approved by our diocese. Appropriate training is made available for all staff teaching RSE.

#### Outline of topics covered

##### Year 7

Core Theme	Session Title	Learning Objectives
Religious Understanding	Session 1: Who Am I	Pupils will learn that they are a completely unique person, and that, body and soul, they are created and loved by God.
My Body	Session 2: Changing Bodies	Pupils will learn that puberty involves physical, emotional and sexual development. Whilst this might feel daunting, they will learn that puberty is God's plan for them and He is with them throughout it all.
Emotional Well-Being	Session 3: Healthy Inside and Out	Pupils will learn about self-esteem: what contributes to it, how it can affect their lives and how to increase it.
Life Cycles	Session 4: Where We Come From	Pupils will learn about sexual intercourse as more than just a physical act, but a gift from God for married couples as His plan for how babies are made.
Personal Relationships	Family and Friends	Pupils will learn about different types of friendship and family structure, and discuss how better to manage their behaviour through consideration of thoughts, feelings and actions.
Keeping Safe	Session 6: My Life on Screen	Pupils will learn that they have online 'lives' that they need to take steps to safeguard, just as they do in real life.
Wider World	Session 7: Living Responsibly	Pupils will learn the effects of their actions on others and understand the concept of social responsibility.

## RSE Policy

### Year 8

Core Theme	Session Title	Objectives
Religious Understanding	Session 1: Created and Chosen	Becoming aware of our uniqueness can help us open up to God who is the ground of our being and the One who loves us.
Personal Relationships	Session 2: Feelings	Understanding sexual attraction, which requires self-control, mutual respect and patience to manage well. Pupils will also learn that God has a plan for sex: that our deepest drive to love and be loved is met through sexual union which is total, faithful and open to the precious gift of life.
Life Cycles	Session 3: Before I was Born	Contemplating life in the womb reveals that it is both beautiful and fragile
Personal Relationships	Session 4: Tough Relationships	In the wider world or our close relationships we can always be better at living with tolerance, kindness and forgiveness.
Keeping Safe	Session 5: Think before you share	Pupils will learn about the consequences of sharing images of a sexual nature, how to resist pressure to do this, and the importance of setting rules to keep themselves safe online.

### Year 9

Core Theme	Session Title	Objectives
My Body	Session 1: Love People, Use Things	Pupils will learn about objectification, and consider the negative impact of casual sex, pornography and masturbation.
Emotional Well-Being	Session 2: In Control of My Choices	Pupils will learn about love and lust, shame and regret and delaying sexual intimacy: all with a view to making wise, informed and mindful choices.
Life Cycles	Session 3: Fertility and Contraception	Pupils will learn about methods for managing conception and discuss how they uphold or contravene God's plan for sex.
Keeping Safe	Session 4: One Hundred Percent	Pupils will learn that consent is not just gaining permission for something but choosing to honour and respect one another as persons with innate dignity. Pupils will learn about physical consent and sexual exploitation.
Wider World	Session 5: Knowing My Rights and Responsibilities	Identify what to look out for when a victim may have, or may be soon to experience FGM AND forced marriage. Describe how girls are encouraged into the process and reasons why it's often unreported. Explain why girls feel so much pressure, analyse the link between FGM and patriarchal societies and the main factors for why there are so few prosecutions for FGM and forced marriage.

### Year 10

Core Theme	Session title	Objectives/description
Religious Understanding	Session 1: Authentic Freedom	Making a loving gift of self is an ideal worth holding out for, one which leads to real freedom.
My Body	Session 2: Self Image	Pupils will learn about different experiences of body shame, explore notions of 'dignity' and 'modesty' in relation to the body and consider that our bodies are good, as part of our unique, inseparable combination of body and soul.
Emotional Well-Being (two sessions)	Session 3: Love and Cherish	Drama relating to the decision to enter into a physical relationship.  Pause at regular intervals to discuss different aspects. Detailed discussion/reminders of the dangers of sexting including the legal aspect (this is not covered in the Ten Ten resources)
Life Cycles	Session 4: Abortion	Pupils will consider the impact of an unwanted pregnancy. Learn about the legality and morality around the issue of abortion.
Keeping Safe	Session 5: Abuse	Abuse in relationships is incompatible with our dignity and calls for vigilance and compassion.

Year 11

Core Themes	Session title	Objectives/description
My Body, Life Cycles, Personal Wellbeing and Keeping Safe	Pregnancy and Parenthood (Ten Ten)	To gain knowledge and understanding of the implication pregnancy can have. Consider options in the situation of an unwanted pregnancy.
	Fertility and contraception	To gain knowledge and understanding of fertility and the options available to couples who may struggle with fertility/same sex couples. To develop understating of different forms of contraception and the side effects they can have.
	STIs	Pupils will consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The health implications of engaging in unprotected sex.</li> <li>• Learn about the dangers STIs can pose.</li> </ul>
	Coercive Control (Ten Ten)	Pupils will consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The many forms of coercive control</li> <li>• Why victims might find it hard to leave abusive relationships</li> <li>• Victim-blaming and other societal attitudes towards misogyny and sexual violence (including rape)</li> </ul>

Ten Ten have also entered into a partnership with the Catholic Education Service and the Department for Education to provide training for teachers in Catholic schools on the statutory curriculum.

Through their programme, Ten Ten understand the foundational role that parents have in educating and nurturing their children on relationships and sex education. Within the programme, there are resources which will inform you about what is being taught in school and will also give you the opportunity to engage your children in discussion, activity and prayer. To access this, you will need the following information to access Ten Ten’s ‘parent portal’:

Parent Portal: <https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-portal/>

Username: st-anthonys-sr2

Password: song-13-sr2

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board will approve the RSE policy, and will hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Assistant Headteacher (Personal Development), working alongside the Headteacher, is responsible for ensuring RSE is taught consistently and sensitively across the academy, and for monitoring and evaluating lessons via:

- Internal quality assurance process
- Staff and pupil voice

RSE is a whole school issue. All staff 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 wellbeing of their pupils. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the academy.

## **7. Parents and Carers and Right to Withdraw**

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary educators of their child. As a Catholic academy, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their child.

Parents/carers will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to discuss and answer questions about their child's learning.

Parents have been consulted in the implementation of this policy, and will continue to be consulted during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. This can be done up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the academy will arrange this.

If you wish to withdraw your child from the sex education parts of RSE lessons and activities, please complete the attached form and return to the Assistant Headteacher (Personal Development). Alternatively, if you'd like to discuss these lessons in more detail, please contact the Assistant Headteacher (Personal Development) who will arrange a phone call or meeting with you.

Alternative work will be provided to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.



**Appendix: Parent/Carer form – Withdrawal from sex education in RSE**

Please forward to Assistant Headteacher (Personal Development)

Name of child:		Class:	
Name of parent:		Date:	
Reason(s) for wanting to withdraw your child from sex education in the RSE curriculum?			
Any other information you'd like us to consider?			
Parent/Carer signature:			

***To be completed by the academy:***

Date of follow up discussion/meeting:	
Actions taken:	
Signature:	