

‘A joyful union of Catholic Schools’

Relationships Sex and Health Education Policy

2025 – 2026



With Jesus in our hearts,
we welcome, we learn,
we laugh, we flourish.



Together we love, care,
learn and thrive under
the umbrella of God.

Why is RSHE important at our schools?

At St Mary's and Thorneyholme Primary Schools, our curriculum is underpinned by our vision and values and it reflects our faith and our mission statement. We place our children at the centre of our schools and seek to develop the whole child spiritually, morally, physically, emotionally, culturally and academically, so they are well prepared to meet future challenges.

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 our Catholic schools. Our approach to RSHE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

VATICAN II states that

"... children and young people should be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities ... they should receive a positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex ... and young people have the right to be stimulated to make sound moral judgements based on a well-informed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment ..."

The DfE RSHE guidance states that

"Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, 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."

Intent

Both St Mary's and Thorneyholme's approach to RSHE is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals. RSHE is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships within themselves and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience, within the diverse world around them.

At our schools, we provide a specifically tailored curriculum that is both broad and balanced, and meets the unique context of our school. We give pupils access to big ideas and conversations, alongside practical experiences.

We aim to promote children's knowledge, self-esteem, emotional wellbeing and resilience, and to help them to form and maintain worthwhile and positive relationships. Children will be taught to have respect for themselves, and for others, within our local, national and global communities.

We aim to develop key character skills, including decision making, informed risk taking, good communication, and self-regulation strategies. We encourage the exploration of, and respect for, values held by different cultures and groups within our local community and globally, and promote the development of positive attitudes. We encourage honesty and respect in all relationships, and nurture sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others.

We aim to enable children to develop a deepening knowledge of their health and wellbeing, including their mental and physical health. We aim to equip children and young people with information, skills and values to understand and to be able to cope with the physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty. The information provided within teaching and discussions with the children will be relevant and appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils.

Across both schools we aim to prepare pupils adequately for adult life: its decisions, responsibilities, experiences and opportunities, and to allow pupils to develop fully as emotionally mature human beings.

Purpose of study

(information taken from Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance from the DfE)

The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils should be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.

Respect for others should be taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

From the beginning, teachers should talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts should enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers should address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers should include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBTQ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.

A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as 'virtues') in the individual. In a school wide context which encourages the development and practice of resilience and other attributes, this includes character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils should develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing. Through Relationships and Health Education, schools should teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In primary schools, this can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

Implementation

RSHE is firmly embedded in our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. Both our schools use the Jigsaw scheme of work and for our 'Sex Education' content we use Ten:Ten 'Life to the Full' material to ensure our curriculum is aligned to our Catholic faith. Both these comprehensive schemes of work brings consistency and progression to our children's learning in this vital curriculum area.

See Appendix 1 for the DFE Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory end of primary school aims.

Sex Education Content

At St Mary's and Thorneyholme Primary Schools the **Ten:Ten 'Life to the Full'** sex education content taught is listed below.

EYFS	
Heads, Shoulders, Knees & Toes Module 1 Unit 2	The names of the parts of the body (not genitalia).
KS1	
Girls & Boy's (My Body) Module 1 Unit 2	Our bodies are good; The names of the parts of our bodies (please refer to the Module Overview for important guidance on discussing genitalia);

	Girls and boys have been created by God to be both similar and different - these differences are physical, emotional and spiritual and together make up the richness of the human family.
Lower KS2	
Respecting our Bodies Module 1 Unit 2	About the need to respect and look after their bodies as a gift from God through what they wear, what they eat and what they physically do.
What is Puberty? Module 1 Unit 2	Learn what the term puberty means; Learn when they can expect puberty to take place; Understand that puberty is part of God's plan for our bodies
Changing Bodies Module 1 Unit 2	Learn correct naming of genitalia; Learn what changes will happen to boys during puberty; Learn what changes will happen to girls during puberty.
Life Cycles Module 1 Unit 4	That they were handmade by God with the help of their parents; How a baby grows and develops in its mother's womb including, scientifically, the uniqueness of the moment of conception; How conception and life in the womb fits into the cycle of life; That throughout their lives human beings act at three integrated levels: physical, psychological and spiritual.
Upper KS2	
Girls' Bodies Module 1 Unit 2	That human beings are different to other animals; About the unique growth and development of humans, and the changes that girls will experience during puberty; About the need to respect their bodies as a gift from God to be looked after well, and dressed appropriately; The need for modesty and appropriate boundaries.
Boys' Bodies Module 1 Unit 2	That human beings are different in kind to other animals; About the unique growth and development of humans, and the changes that boys will experience during puberty; About the need to respect their bodies as a gift from God to be looked after well, and treated appropriately;

	The need for modesty and appropriate boundaries
Peculiar Feelings Module 1 Unit 3	To deepen their understanding of the range and intensity of their feelings; that 'feelings' are not good guides for action. That some behaviour is wrong, unacceptable, unhealthy or risky.
Emotional Changes Module 1 Unit 3	Emotions change as they grow up (including hormonal effects); To deepen their understanding of the range and intensity of their feelings; that 'feelings' are not good guides for action; About emotional well-being: that beauty, art, etc. can lift the spirit; and that also openness with trusted parents/carers/teachers when worried ensures healthy well-being.
Making Babies (P1) Module 1 Unit 4	How a baby grows and develops in its mother's womb.
Menstruation Module 1 Unit 4	About the nature and role of menstruation in the fertility cycle, and that fertility is involved in the start of life; Some practical help on how to manage the onset of menstruation.

The **Jigsaw** sex education content to **omit** and **not teach** is listed below.

Year 1 & Year 2 Physical Health & Mental Wellbeing	
Changing Adolescent Body (H34) key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes	Year 1 Changing Me Lesson 4 Year 2 Changing Me Lesson 3 & 4
Year 3 & Year 4 Physical Health & Mental Wellbeing	
Changing Adolescent Body (H34) key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes	Year 3 Changing Me Lesson 3 & 4 Year 4 Changing Me Lesson 2 & 3
Changing Adolescent Body (H35) about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle	Year 3 Changing Me Lesson 3 & 4 Year 4 Changing Me Lesson 3
Year 5 & Year 6 Physical Health & Mental Wellbeing	
Changing Adolescent Body (H34) key facts about puberty and	Year 5 Changing Me Lesson 2 – 4 Year 6 Changing Me Lesson 2

the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes	
Changing Adolescent Body (H35) about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle	Year 5 Changing Me Lesson 2 Year 6 Changing Me Lesson 2 & 3

Jigsaw covers all other aspects of the statutory Relationships and Health Education curriculum. The table below gives the learning theme of each of the six Jigsaw Puzzles (units) and these are taught across the school; the learning deepens and broadens every year.

Term	Puzzle (Unit)	Content
Autumn 1	Being Me in My World	Includes understanding my own identity and how I fit well in the class, school and global community. Jigsaw Charter established.
Autumn 2	Celebrating Difference	Includes anti-bullying (cyber and homophobic bullying included) and understanding.
Spring 1	Dreams and Goals	Includes goal-setting, aspirations, who do I want to become and what would I like to do for work and to contribute to society.
Spring 2	Healthy Me	Includes drugs and alcohol education, self-esteem and confidence as well as healthy lifestyle choices, sleep, nutrition, rest and exercise.
Summer 1	Relationships	Includes understanding friendship, family and other relationships, conflict resolution and communication skills, bereavement and loss.
Summer 2	Changing Me	Includes Relationships and Sex Education in the context of coping positively with change. Please the which lessons are to be omitted and replaced with Ten:Ten scheme lessons.

Parents and Carers

“Parents are the first educators of their children. It is their right and responsibility to inform and educate their children in matters relating to human growth and development, particularly sexual

development. Therefore, schools should always work in partnership with parents and carers and the teaching offered by schools should complement and not replace their primary role.”

‘Who is responsible for teaching RSHE?’ Document of the Catholic Education Service, 2024

Parents have been consulted before this policy was ratified by the governors. They have been consulted at every stage of the development of the RSHE programme. They are able to view the resources used by the school in the RSHE programme and they will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSHE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children’s learning.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Sex Education provided at school except for those parts included in statutory National Curriculum Science. Those wishing to exercise this right will be invited in to speak to the head teacher to explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Parents do not have the right to withdraw children from the Relationships and Health Education.

Impact

The impact of a good RSHE education cannot be understated. Quite simply, it forms the preparation for adult life, enabling a child to understand and face the challenges, complexities and questions that arise in a diverse world. Children will recognise and develop good relationships, recognise and understand positive mental and physical health, understand how their body will change and grow, develop respect and tolerance for all with an understanding of society and the role of the individual in a community – these will equip our children for life.

Impact can be measured in a variety of ways. At our schools we recognise and celebrate the importance of the child’s voice, and their individual experience of RSHE education. Pupil voice, and lessons captured via floor books and exercise books, will form the heart of how we measure the impact of our teaching. The findings of the impact will be reported by the subject leader to the senior leadership team and their suggestions sought for improvements.

Governors will review this policy in conjunction with the Head Teacher and monitor the policy’s effectiveness.

Appendix 1

Aims of the Relationships and Health Education National Curriculum:

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

Relationships education outcomes:

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

Physical health and mental wellbeing outcomes:

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 a scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
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	• 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 on their own and others' mental and mental 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 an 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 others 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.
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.