



Blessed Carlo Acutis
Catholic and C of E Academy

Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Review Period	Two -Yearly
Person Responsible for Policy	Head of School
Governing Committee	
Date of SGB Approval	November 2023
Date for Review	November 2025

“He had compassion on them and began to teach” (Mk 6:34)

“Young people are at the age when they must make basic life-choices which affect the future of society and of the Church” (Salesian Constitutions No 26)

“ All people are born as originals but many die as photocopies” (Carlo Acutis)

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic and Church of England Academy is a fully inclusive, faith centred, welcoming Christian community guided by the example of Jesus Christ. We work together in order to nurture, value, and support all members of our school family. We promote loving, respectful relationships, lasting friendships filled with laughter and a secure learning environment for all staff and students. Together we will seek to realise our potential with pride, ambition and positivity.

Faith in God, Faith in Ability, Faith in Each Other

Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic and Church of England Academy Academy is the only faith school in Runcorn and the only joint-church school in Cheshire. Members of our school community are bound by the common thread of shared Christian values encapsulated in the school’s motto: ‘Faith in God, Faith in Ability, Faith in Each Other.’

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF POLICY

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors in the Autumn term 2023. This policy will be reviewed every year two years by the Head Teacher, Strategic Lead, the Governing Body and staff. The next review date is November 2025.

DISSEMINATION

The policy will be available 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 through the school’s website and you can request a copy from the school office. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be embedded within the road map and published with the PSHE programme on the school’s web site.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

In Secondary schools, RSE should “Give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague, a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).” As a Faith community rooted in the spiritual teaching of our founder Blessed Carlo Acutis, we aim to form our students to be ‘good Christians and honest citizens’. In his teachings, Blessed Carlo Acutis strived to lead young people on a path to wholeness; at Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic and C of E Academy, through the RSE programme we follow Carlo Acutis’s example and leadership.

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science.

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further,

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

(Jn.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 and C of E Academy. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the 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. RSE therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of relationships, as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales, the SJCMAT Trustees 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 students. It is centred on Christ’s vision of being human in the 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 students have a fundamental right to have their life respected, whatever household they come from. It will also prepare students for life in modern Britain.

VALUES AND VIRTUES

Our programme enshrines Catholic and C of E values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. We promote this virtue which is essential in supporting students 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 RSE AND THE MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, and social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our Academy aims state that we will endeavour to raise students’ 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” which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, rooted in a Catholic and C of E vision of education and the human person.

Objectives

To develop the following attitudes and virtues:

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

To develop the following personal and social skills:

- making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity, and are respectful of the individual's commitments;
- loving and being loved, and 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.

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 keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

OUTCOMES

INCLUSION AND ADAPTIVE TEACHING

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual students in respect to students' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject students to discrimination. Lessons will also help students 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. This will be taken place by form teachers who will deliver the content along with outside agencies and our own in school professionals. This policy runs alongside our safeguarding policy.

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 students, 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 RSE

Three aspects of RSE - 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.

Teaching strategies may include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- values clarification

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 and C of E Academy, we provide the principle means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children, we do this by providing this course in school. Parents/carers can track topics the students will undertake by following the maps online in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents continue to have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education except in those elements which are

required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children, they are asked to notify the school by contacting the Head Teacher.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. Please refer to the DfE guidance Page 26 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw). Appendix 2

BALANCED CURRICULUM

Whilst promoting Catholic and C of E values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church doctrine, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues.

Students will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE (in secondary schools/academies relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). 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 and C of E teachings. We will ensure that students have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING THE PROGRAMME

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with the Strategic Lead. However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They will be role models for students of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and students. They will also be contributing to the development of students' personal and social skills.

EXTERNAL VISITORS

Our Academy will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. 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. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with our guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools. Health professionals should follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic and C of E principles and practice.

OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSE

Governors:

- draw up the RSE 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.

HEAD TEACHER

The Head Teacher 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, also appropriate agencies.

PSHE/RSE STRATEGIC LEAD

The Strategic Lead with the Head Teacher 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 RSE and the provision of in-service training.

ALL STAFF

RSE is the concern of the whole school community. 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 well-being of their Students. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic and C of E Ethos of the Academy. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE. 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 the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc).

Students with particular difficulties, whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of students. Learning about RSE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSE audit.

CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS

The Governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSE can take place. They want to ensure that students can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, be sure they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people. The Student Council will be asked to evaluate and give feedback about the RSE programme and its delivery.

CONTROVERSIAL OR SENSITIVE ISSUES

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. 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. The Governors believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and students, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g. where a child or young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE AT RISK

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE 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 students 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 safeguarding lead.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE

Governors, teachers, support staff, parents and all students must be made aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality.

All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, will have the best interests of students 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, underpinning the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Students will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help students facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's safeguarding policy. Teachers should explain to students that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters that raise safeguarding concerns. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others agencies.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The strategic lead will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of students work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires / response sheets / needs assessment given to students, and / or by discussion with students, 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.

Appendix 2

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283599/sex_and_relationship_education_guidance.pdf