

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy (RSHE)

St Mark's Catholic Primary School



Mission Statement

Our school mission statement:

Jesus said: *'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'*

John 10:10

At St Mark's, we believe that every person is created in the image and likeness of God and is loved unconditionally by Him. We seek to nurture the spiritual, moral, emotional, physical and social development of every child within a Catholic Christian community.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is rooted in the Church's vision of human flourishing and dignity. Through RSHE we aim to support pupils in understanding themselves, developing healthy and respectful relationships, recognising their God-given worth, and growing in virtue as members of the family, school, Church and wider society.

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Online Safety Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Science Policy
- CST Policy
- RE Policy
- Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest version)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE Statutory Guidance: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (for introduction from September 2026)
- Catholic Education Service guidance

- Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales guidance and curriculum expectations

Catholic Ethos and Principles

Our RSHE programme is underpinned by the following Catholic principles:

- Every human person possesses inherent dignity.
- Family life is central to children's development.
- Marriage and family are valued as fundamental building blocks of society.
- Relationships should be characterised by love, respect, fidelity, compassion and responsibility.
- Children should be equipped to make safe, healthy and morally informed choices.
- All people must be treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity.

The school recognises that pupils come from a variety of family backgrounds. We teach about families in a way that is inclusive, respectful and consistent with both Catholic teaching and statutory requirements.

Aims of RSHE

RSHE at St Mark's Catholic Primary School aims to:

- Promote the Catholic vision of human dignity and flourishing.
- Develop pupils' understanding of healthy relationships.
- Foster respect, kindness, empathy and responsibility.
- Support mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Promote physical health and healthy lifestyles.
- Teach children how to stay safe online and offline.
- Enable children to recognise inappropriate behaviour and abuse.
- Develop resilience and self-respect.
- Prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes of growing up.
- Support safeguarding by helping pupils know when and how to seek help.

The revised statutory guidance places increased emphasis on safeguarding, online safety, healthy relationships, consent, misogyny, harmful online content and recognising abuse. These themes are embedded throughout our curriculum.

Curriculum Content

RSHE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships and personal identity.

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

Relationships Education focuses on:

- Families and people who care for me
- Marriage
- Different family structures
- Caring friendships
- The importance of loving, stable relationships
- Respectful relationships
- Friendship skills
- Resolving conflict
- Inclusion
- Online relationships
- Being safe
- Personal boundaries

Health and wellbeing Education focuses on:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and wellbeing online
- Digital citizenship
- Staying safe and healthy online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Developing bodies
- Resilience and managing emotions
- Seeking the correct support
- Water safety
- Road safety

Relationships and sex education in primary schools is limited to:

- Puberty education
- Reproduction as outlined in the Science curriculum

All content is delivered in an age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate way.

Teaching About Protected Characteristics

The school complies fully with the Equality Act 2010.

Pupils will learn that:

- Every person deserves dignity and respect.
- Discrimination, bullying and harassment are wrong.
- People may have different beliefs, backgrounds and experiences.
- Differences should be treated with respect and compassion.

Teaching will be delivered in accordance with statutory guidance and in a manner consistent with Catholic teaching and the school's religious character.

Inclusion and SEND

RSHE will be accessible to all pupils.

Teaching will:

- Be age-appropriate.
- Reflect pupils' developmental needs.
- Be adapted where necessary for pupils with SEND.
- Use inclusive language and resources.
- Ensure all pupils can access key safeguarding messages.

Safeguarding

RSHE plays a vital role in safeguarding children.

The curriculum supports pupils to:

- Recognise abuse.
- Understand appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.
- Recognise coercion and exploitation.
- Identify trusted adults.
- Know how to seek help.

Any disclosures made during RSHE lessons will be managed in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Teaching and Learning

RSHE will be delivered through:

- Dedicated RSHE lessons

- Religious Education
- Science
- Collective Worship
- Cross-curricular opportunities
- Theme days and enrichment activities, including our dedicated 'Healthy Living Week'
- CST
- Group process
- Forest School

Teaching will:

- Be factual and age-appropriate
- Encourage respectful discussion
- Promote critical thinking
- Be sensitive to pupils' backgrounds
- Reflect Catholic values

External visitors may be used where appropriate, but responsibility for RSHE remains with the school.

Assessment

Assessment will focus on:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Personal reflection
- Application of learning
- Participation and engagement

Assessment will not require pupils to disclose personal experiences.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body should also make sure that:

- The religious ethos of the school is maintained and developed
- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes
- The subject is well led, effectively managed and well planned
- The quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes
- the religious ethos of the school is maintained and developed

- Teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND
- Clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.
- The subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSHE

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Parents and Carers

Parents are the first educators of their children.

The school will:

- Consult parents on this policy.
- Provide information about curriculum content.
- Make resources available where appropriate.
- Offer opportunities for discussion and feedback.

The policy will be published on the school website.

Staff Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Headteacher may invite appropriate visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE

When external professionals contribute to RSHE:

- All visitors are appropriately vetted.
- Materials are approved in advance by SLT and governors

Withdrawal from Sex Education

Parents have the right to request withdrawal from any non-statutory sex education taught outside the National Curriculum for Science.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw children from:

- Relationships Education
- Health Education
- National Curriculum Science

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Monitoring and Review

Responsibility for monitoring RSHE lies with:

- Governing Body
- Headteacher
- RSHE Subject Leader

The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required by changes in legislation, diocesan guidance or DfE requirements.

Other Relevant Documents

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (statutory)

[Respectful Schools and a Signposting Tool](#) (a tool to support a whole school approach which promotes respect and discipline)

[The SEND Code of Practice](#) (statutory guidance)

[Alternative Provision](#) (statutory guidance)

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) (advice for schools)

[Preventing Bullying](#) (advice for schools)

[Cyberbullying](#) (advice for schools)

[Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools](#) (advice for schools)

[The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance](#)

[Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in Schools](#) (guidance)

[National Citizen Service](#) (guidance)