



# Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy (RSHE)

## Primary

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|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                          | Statutory Policy aligned with July 2025 Department for Education Guidance 1st September 2026 |
| <b>Date:</b>             | 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2026                                                                   |
| <b>Next review date:</b> | Review 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2028                                                        |
| <b>Responsible Body:</b> | St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust Board of Directors                                |
| <b>Version</b>           | V2                                                                                           |

## Table of changes

| Version Number | Date of Version/Review | Detail changes                                                                                                                              |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| V.1            | July 2026              | Policy adopted                                                                                                                              |
| V.2            | Oct 26                 | Page 2 – Table of changes added<br>Page 11 – Right to Withdraw – text added to broaden the right to withdraw from RE and Collective Worship |
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## Rationale and Catholic Mission

### Encounter – Learn – Grow – Flourish

At the St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust (SCRCAT), our fundamental purpose is to develop an organisation in which each child, adult, and school flourishes in a community that recognises Christ as our guide and inspiration. We are guided by the words of St Irenaeus: 'The glory of God is a human being fully alive'.

To ensure our students are fully prepared for the next phase of their lives, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is delivered in the clear light of our beliefs about God and the dignity of the human person who is uniquely made in the image and likeness of God. This policy is strictly rooted in the Catholic Education Service (CES) Model Framework Policy which aids a strong and deep curriculum approach across all 15 schools.

St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust operates thirteen primary schools and two secondary schools across Kingston Upon Hull, the East Riding of Yorkshire, and North Yorkshire.

Our educational vision is anchored in the words of Jesus Christ:

**"I have come that you might have life and have it to the full" (Jn. 10:10).**

We are involved in relationships, sex and health 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 RSHE therefore is rooted in the Catholic 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. RSHE, 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) RSHE 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 centred 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 RSHE 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.

## Values and Virtues

Our programme enshrines Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential 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 RSHE and the Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education and flourishing of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSHE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our primary school aims are that we will endeavour to raise pupils' 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”<sup>1</sup> which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic 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;
- ❖ 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**:

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<sup>1</sup> *Gravissimum Educationis* 1

- ❖ develop the skills that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, from the very start of their education, to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others
- ❖ making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity, and which 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;
- ❖ developing skills for managing difficult feelings in their friendships, like disappointment or anger.
- ❖ being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely;
- ❖ Develop skills to keep themselves and others safe, and to recognise and report risks and abuse, including online.
- ❖ Ability to assess risks and manage behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.
- ❖ Develop skills to understand what counts as abusive behaviour and learn to trust their instincts about behaviour that doesn't feel right.
- ❖ Ability to understand about bullying, and that this can include the use of derogatory terms relating to sex, race, disability or sexual orientation.

**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;
- ❖ Knowledge and strategies of who to speak to and what to do when they have concerns about themselves or others and the ability to be resilient when seeking help.
- ❖ Know and understand that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child.

## **Our Curriculum for RSHE**

The Christian belief in the unique dignity of the human person, made in the image and likeness of God, forms the basis of all that we aim to teach the children about:

- ❖ how to form loving relationships,
- ❖ how to understand the gift of human sexuality and
- ❖ how to care for the gift of their health and the health of others.

By combining these three areas in the subject of RSHE, we help the children to understand how to do this well. In the light of the knowledge that we are made in God's image and likeness, through the RSHE curriculum, we learn that we are made to know and love Him, and through this relationship, to love ourselves and then to love others. It is for this reason that the three areas of Relationship Education, Sex Education and Health Education are interrelated and should sit together in a well-planned and continuous curriculum.

### **Relationships Education**

In a Catholic school, relationships education should be anchored in the understanding of Human dignity and the knowledge that we are all precious children of God – and therefore should be concerned with developing positive, respectful relationships with others. Because of the knowledge that we are known and loved by God, it should also equip children with the knowledge and of how to keep themselves - and others - safe, and how to recognise and report risks and abuse, including online. In light of this, we will teach children about boundaries, privacy, and children's rights over their own bodies and personal information. As precious children of God, it is essential that we teach children to recognise emotional, physical and sexual abuse in an age-appropriate and non-alarming way. Even very young children can be equipped to understand what counts as abusive behaviour and to trust their instincts about behaviour that doesn't feel right. In addition, in the light of human dignity, we will teach children to understand about bullying, and that this can include the use of derogatory terms relating to sex, race, disability or sexual orientation – and equip them with strategies of who they can talk to and what to do when they feel that something is wrong.

### **Sex Education**

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, however it is recommended by the DfE, that primaries teach sex education in years 5 and 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the statutory national curriculum for science. The national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including

puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. In our Catholic school, we will ensure that all sex education is rooted in the Catholic church's teaching and will be placed firmly within the context of relationship - as it is there that sexuality grows and develops and we commit to fostering an understanding in children that gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity. In Catholic schools, we believe that parents are the first educators of children and therefore – and in line with DfE Guidelines – we commit to consultation with our parents about the content of anything that will be taught within sex education. This process will include offering parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school as well as advice about parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education.

We have consulted with parents, the Middlesbrough Diocese Education Service and Directors of the Trust in producing this policy.

## **Health and Wellbeing Education**

In our Catholic school, we hold the belief that our bodies are gifts from God and as such, we are called to care for our health and for the health of others. In the light of this, we aim to teach children about health and wellbeing, to enable pupils to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to understand the links between physical and mental health, to recognise when things are not right in their own health or the health of others and to seek support when needed. We also commit to supporting pupils to develop strategies for self-regulation, perseverance and determination, even in the face of setbacks.

## **Inclusion**

We will ensure RSHE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances. Teaching is developed to ensure these subjects are accessible for pupils with SEND and prepare pupils for adulthood, as set out in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

Pupils with specific challenges, whether of a physical or intellectual nature, will receive appropriately adapted teaching and support to enable them to develop mature knowledge, understanding and skills within their capacity. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of pupils.

## Equality

The Directors of St Cuthbert's Trust have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our schools do the best for all our pupils, 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.

## Resources

In the provision and use of resources to teach the RSHE curriculum, the Trust is committed to:

- ❖ Promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching
- ❖ Ensuring that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSHE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues.
- ❖ Pupils will receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSHE. (It is important to understand that 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 teaching.)
- ❖ Ensuring that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.
- ❖ Ensure coverage of all statutory topics, recognising that young people can start developing healthy behaviour and relationship skills as soon as they start school.
- ❖ Ensure that the curriculum is carefully sequenced, so that pupils are supported and equipped with the knowledge to navigate different experiences in a positive way before they occur, and to prevent harms.
- ❖ Adopt an inclusive, well-sequenced RSHE curriculum, informed by meaningful engagement with pupils to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and engaging.

In order to achieve this and in line with Diocesan protocol, the school will follow the **Ten:Ten Resources programme** *'Life to the Full'*. The Trust mandates the use of the 10:10 RSE and PSHE resource across its schools to maintain fidelity and structural cohesion. The use of 10 PolEd for contextual safeguarding is also accepted within the PSHE framework.

An ongoing central team audit is in place across all 15 schools to guarantee that current resources are utilised consistently and correctly.

The Ten:Ten Resources *'Life to the Full'* programme adopts a spiral curriculum approach so that as a child goes through the programme year-after-year, the learning will develop

and grow, with each stage building on the last. The content is organised in three modules that have been developed in line with the Catholic Education Service Model Framework for teaching RSE in Catholic schools.

- ❖ Module One: Created and Loved by God - this explores the individual. Rooted in the teaching that we are made in the image and likeness of God, it helps children to develop an understanding of the importance of valuing themselves as the basis for personal relationships.
- ❖ Module Two: Created to Love Others -this explores the individual's relationship with others. Building on the understanding that we have been created out of love and for love, this Module explores how we take this calling into our family, friendships and relationships, and teaches strategies for developing healthy relationships and keeping safe both online and in our daily lives.
- ❖ Module Three: Created to Live in Community -this explores the individual's relationship with the wider world. Here we explore how human beings are relational by nature and are called to love others in the wider community through service, through dialogue and through working for the Common Good.

An overview of content and examples of lessons can be viewed by parents on the Ten:Ten Parent Portal – [Information for Parents – Ten Ten Resources](#)

## **Responsibility for Teaching**

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme resides with teaching staff in our primary schools. The RE Curriculum Coordinator and PSHE Curriculum Coordinator will work together to ensure training, moderation of work and monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and appropriate.

All staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSHE programme. They will be role models for pupils of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and pupils. They will also be contributing to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.

Our schools will focus on building positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships, including sexual relationships where relevant, and about health, including mental health. Staff will avoid language which might normalise harmful behaviour among young people, for example gendered language which might normalise male violence or stigmatise boys. Teaching should be responsive to the contextual safeguarding of the school and should be age appropriate and respectful of all children, including those who may have no familiarity with the topics under discussion. The school will also inform parents of any deviation from their published RSE policy in advance and share any relevant materials with them on request.

## External Visitors

Some of our schools call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSHE. 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 CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools <sup>2</sup> which can be found here: [External Speakers](#)

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 principles and practice.

## 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 school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Therefore, our schools will support parents and carers by providing material to be shared with their children at home and through workshops where appropriate to help parents/carers to find out more. Parents/carers will be informed by letter/email 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 and carers can view a curriculum overview on the school website and learn more about the materials via the Ten:Ten Parent Portal. Should parents request to view individual lesson content, they should make contact with the school RE Lead who will make the necessary arrangements. More information for parents can be found here: [Information for Parents – Ten Ten Resources](#)

Parents and the Middlesbrough Diocese Education Service are consulted at every stage of the development of the RSHE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation of this policy. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSHE programme. Our aim is that every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSHE programme to meet their child's needs.

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<sup>2</sup> CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2016

## Right to Withdraw

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 headteacher, who will arrange for a meeting to take place to establish the elements of the curriculum from which the child is able to be withdrawn. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning. (It is important to note that the right to withdraw from Sex Education does not extend to Relationship and Health Education).

Please refer to the DfE's RSE and Health Education guidance, July 2025 p.6 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

Voluntary Academies within the St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust ensure that Religious Education is provided as an integral part of each school's basic curriculum.

In accordance with our Trust's instrument of government, funding agreement, Articles of Association and Catholic ethos, Religious Education is taught in accordance with the teachings, doctrines and norms of the Catholic Church.

Similarly, all state-funded academies in England are required by law to provide a daily act of collective worship. Within the Trust, collective worship is celebrated in accordance with the rites and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.

Parents of pupils enrolled at any school within the Trust retain the legal right to request that their child be withdrawn, wholly or in part, from Religious Education and/or Collective Worship. Any such request to withdraw that is granted will remain in effect until explicitly withdrawn by the parent.

Every request to withdraw will be considered by the school on its own facts. Further information and guidance regarding the right of withdrawal can be accessed directly from the Diocese of Middlesbrough Schools Service website: [www.middlesbroughdioceseschoolservice.org.uk](http://www.middlesbroughdioceseschoolservice.org.uk)

## Roles and Responsibilities

### **Trust Directors through the Executive Team will:**

- ❖ draw up the RSHE policy, in consultation with parents, executive team members, teachers and Diocese Education Service;
- ❖ ensure that the policy is available to parents on the school websites;

- ❖ ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole trust policies,
- ❖ ensure that the policy meets statutory DfE requirements;
- ❖ ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children;
- ❖ establish a local 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 RSHE within PSHE.
- ❖ Quality assure the delivery of the policy

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher takes overall delegated responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for liaison with the Local Governing Body, parents, the Diocesan Schools' Service and Trust Directors.

### **RE Coordinator**

The coordinator 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. (They may be supported by the SLT curriculum lead and the member DSL.)

### **All Staff**

- ❖ RSHE is a whole school issue. All teaching staff must be empowered, trained, and confident to deliver this content safely.
- ❖ All teachers 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 pupils.
- ❖ Staff will be supported through targeted training adapted from the Bishop's Certificate modules, equipping them to bridge Church moral philosophy with compassionate classroom delivery.
- ❖ Teachers will be expected to teach RSHE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSHE. All staff should be aware of this policy and how it relates to them.
- ❖ Resources from the Catholic Education Service will also support the development of teachers such as the publication 'An introduction to Catholic Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) for Catholic Educators'

Link for Staff training:

[Ten Ten E-Learning Platform – Relationships, Sex and Health Education Teacher Training Course \(primary schools\) – Ten Ten Resources](#)

## **Policy**

This RSHE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework, with the statutory guidance on RSE and Health education comprising a majority of this framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy etc). The Science curriculum contains elements of human development and health that link to RSE and Health Education and these are taught in a sequential way to enable a fuller understanding of the topics.

## **Pupil Voice**

The Trust Directors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSHE can take place. They want to ensure that pupils can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people.

Some pupils may ask questions about topics which go beyond the curriculum content. These questions will be handled with sensitivity, ensuring that the pupil feels heard and supported in an appropriate way. We recognise that unanswered questions may lead pupils to turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online. Our schools will offer individualised support to parents in dealing with responses to such questions and signposting to support services where needed.

## **Safeguarding**

Children need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSHE takes place. Effective RSHE will provide opportunities for discussion, and such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately following the school's safeguarding procedures.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

As already referred to, the RE Coordinator and PSHE Coordinator will monitor the provision of the programme in a considered and appropriate way.

The policy will be evaluated biennially by means of discussion and digital forms through:

- ❖ Pupil Voice
- ❖ Staff Voice
- ❖ Parent Voice

The Trust will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

**A consultation process began in July 2026 and will close in September 2026.**

The policy will not be published on the schools' websites until 7<sup>th</sup> September 2026 when the full consultation process has stopped.

## **Dissemination**

The policy will be given to all Directors of the Trust Board, members of the Local Governing Body, all teaching and non-teaching members of staff and parents. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website. Details of the content of the RSHE curriculum will also be published on the school's web site.