

St Gregory's Catholic Middle School
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SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

Reviewed by School

On 12th June 2014

Ratified June 2014

Reviewed by School

June 2015

Ratified 30th September 2015

Next Due for Review June 2016

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

This Policy has been written in line with the Department for Education guidance: **Sex and Relationship Education Guidance**: Ref: DfEE 0116/2000 (July 2000): <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00214676/sex-and-relationships-education-guidance>. It is a statutory policy and is reviewed annually.

The Policy includes:

- A definition of sex and relationship education;
- A description of how sex and relationship education is provided and who is responsible for providing it;
- A description of the responsibilities of teachers delivering Sex and Relationships education
- A description of how sex and relationship education is monitored and evaluated;
- Information about parents' right to withdrawal;
- Details of how the policy will be reviewed.

Section 1: A definition of sex and relationship education

Sex and Relationships education at St Gregory's takes into account the beliefs and values of the Catholic Church. It is seen as a developing process to be shared with parents/guardians of the child. Sex and Relationships education is dealt with as part of an overall programme of growth and health education set in a Catholic framework. It seeks to inform and reassure the students with clear moral guidelines about the development of their bodies and the growth of relationships. At St Gregory's our approach to education in sexuality will be to seek to celebrate the good in creation, and will affirm the fundamental goodness of the human person (Gen 1:31) which is further emphasised by the gift of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

If young people can start their transition into adulthood with good information and the confidence and knowledge to understand what is happening to them, they will hopefully grow into confident and healthy adults able to make positive choices. This can start with learning the basics about growing up and the sessions in school should reinforce what you are already doing at home.

The key aims of our programme are to provide knowledge and encourage the acquisition of skills and attitudes, which will allow pupils to manage their lives in a responsible and healthy way.

- We will seek to instil awe and wonder at the miracle of creation.
- We will endeavour to teach our pupils a respect for human life and one another.
- We will give factual information about the physical and emotional changes that children and young people will experience through

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their formative years and into adulthood in a sensitive way that will allow the students to ask questions and voice concerns.

- We will establish an awareness of the importance of stable family life and relationships, including the responsibilities of parenthood and marriage.
- We will foster self-awareness and self-esteem.
- In lessons, relationships with God, the family and other people are discussed and explored and the need to build these upon Christian principles is stressed.
- We will support students to develop a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves and others.

Section 2: How sex and relationship education is provided and who is responsible for providing it

The programme is delivered as part of the PHSE and Science curriculum in all year groups. In KS2 class teachers are responsible for delivering PHSE and Science. In KS3 PSHE is delivered by a small team of specialist teachers and Science is delivered by a specialist Science Teacher.

The programme includes materials from 'The Theology of the Body for Teens' (a curriculum originally devised by Pope John Paul II), the 'All that I am' programme written by the Archdiocese of Birmingham, videos from the BBC, SEAL materials from 'The National Strategies' and video and written material from the NHS. All teaching materials are appropriate to the age and emotional maturity of the pupils concerned and the teachers will aim to present the programme in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner. All materials used in school are in accordance with the PSHE framework and the law. Inappropriate images are not used. Governors, the PHSE co-ordinator, the Head of Science and the head teacher will take on board concerns raised by parents/carers, both on materials which are offered to schools and on sensitive material to be used in the classroom.

The KS2 programme covers:

1. Relationships (PSHE)
2. Life cycles (Science)

The KS3 programme covers:

1. Changing Relationships
2. Levels of Happiness (PHSE)
3. Physical Changes (inc. Puberty, Menstruation) (PHSE)
4. Different types and levels of love (PSHE)
5. Personal Hygiene (PHSE)
6. Reproduction (Science)

The Department for Education specifies that students should be taught about Puberty, Menstruation and Contraception.

Puberty

Boys and girls need to be prepared for puberty. The main teaching about Puberty is done in Year 7. This is age-appropriate for the majority of students.

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This will enable students to manage the changes well as they will know and understand that they will change and develop, and will have confidence in managing the physical and emotional changes. Where students develop early, they will be supported on an individual basis.

Menstruation

The onset of menstruation can be alarming for girls if they are not prepared. Research shows that about a third of girls are not told about periods by their parents and 10% receive no preparation at all before their first period. As with education about puberty, our Sex and Relationships programme includes preparation for menstruation. We make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls cope with menstruation and with requests for sanitary protection.

Contraception

Although there is an expectation from the Department of Education to teach students about the different types of contraception as a major part of the Government's strategy to reduce teenage pregnancy, this is not taught explicitly as part of our Sex and Relationships programme. In 1968, Pope Paul VI issued his landmark encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae* (Latin, "Human Life"), which reemphasized the Church's constant teaching that it is always intrinsically wrong to use contraception to prevent new human beings from coming into existence.

Contraception is "any action which, either in anticipation of the conjugal act [sexual intercourse], or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible" (*Humanae Vitae* 14). This includes sterilization, condoms and other barrier methods, spermicides, coitus interruptus (withdrawal method), the Pill, and all other such methods.

Curriculum requirements

(Taken from the National Curriculum, 2000)

The combined PSHE and Citizenship framework at Key Stage 2 is developed through four broad themes and makes clear what is appropriate. The present requirements set out within National Curriculum Science and shown in the box below should be delivered through these four broad themes to ensure effective provision. The four themes are:

- developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of pupils' abilities;
- preparing to play an active role as citizens;
- developing a healthier, safer lifestyle; and
- developing good relationships and respecting differences between people.

In KS2 primary school level sex and relationship education should contribute to the foundation of PSHE and Citizenship by ensuring that all children:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships;
- are able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work;
- can protect themselves and ask for help and support; and

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- are prepared for puberty.

At Key Stage, Citizenship is delivered under a statutory order and PSHE is non-statutory. Despite these differences, some aspects of the four broad themes of Key Stages 1 and 2 and the requirements of Key Stage 3 of National Curriculum Science (set out in the box below) can still be related to each other and delivered through them. Sex and relationship education delivered through these four broad themes will ensure effective and appropriate provision.

At secondary school level, sex and relationship education should prepare young people for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour;
- be aware of their sexuality and understand human sexuality;
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity;
- understand the reasons for having protected sex;
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships;
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationships they want;
- communicate effectively;
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from unintended/unwanted conceptions, and sexually-transmitted infections including HIV; avoid being exploited or exploiting others;
- avoid being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex;
- access confidential sexual health advice, support and if necessary treatment;
- and know how the law applies to sexual relationships.

National Curriculum Science

Key Stage 3

1. that fertilisation in humans... is the fusion of a male and a female cell
2. about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence
3. about the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation
4. how the foetus develops in the uterus
5. how the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health

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Section 3: A description of the responsibilities of teachers delivering Sex and Relationships education

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of sex and relationship education within the PSHE and Science framework. Teachers and all those contributing to sex and relationship education are expected to work within the agreed values framework of this policy, which is in line with current legislation. Where teachers need support and training to deliver the programme sensitively and effectively, they must request this as part of their Appraisal reviews.

Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their pupils. They are in a particular position of trust. Sexual relationships involving children under 16 are a criminal offence. A sexual relationship between a teacher and any pupil at the same school or college is a breach of that trust. Such behaviour constitutes serious misconduct on the part of the teacher and will invariably result in disciplinary action, often dismissal, by an employer. It may also lead to a teacher being barred from further employment in the education service by the Secretary of State.

Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings
- identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in the education setting.

Section 4: How sex and relationship education is monitored and evaluated

Sex and Relationship education is monitored as part of the whole-school monitoring and evaluation programme. This includes:

- Monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of the programme and teacher subject knowledge/competency through Appraisal process;
- Monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of the programme through Lesson observations and Learning Walks including Focus Week reviews.
- Calendared reports to the Senior Leadership Team
- Focus groups with students conducted by the PHSE and Science Co-ordinators.
- Staff teaching the programme will be consulted annually on the schemes of work (inc. content, materials and student response).
- Students will be consulted annually on the schemes of work (inc. content, materials and appropriateness).

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Section 5: Information about parents' right to withdraw

Parents can withdraw their children from all or parts of sex education that does not form part of the statutory National Curriculum.

Parents are sent letters informing them of the programme in advance of the delivery of lessons. If parents wish to withdraw their child from all or part of the school's sex education programme, they are asked to put this request in writing to the PSHE Co-ordinator or to the relevant Assistant Head teacher. Parents are given the opportunity to contact the PSHE or Science teacher to discuss the programme or to view any of the teaching materials used.

The Sex and Relationships Policy is available in full to all parents and is published on the school website.

Section 6: How the Policy will be reviewed

The policy is reviewed annually by the PHSE Co-ordinator and the Head teacher and submitted to the Governors' Curriculum sub-committee. The Policy is ratified annually by the Governing Body.

A nominated governor will have a link role between the school and the governing body.

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Original Policy Date: June 2013

Signature of Head Teacher

Signature of Link Governor

APPENDIX 1: THE TRUTH AND MEANING OF HUMAN SEXUALITY
— Selected Passages —

- In the framework of educating the young person for self-realization and self-giving, formation for chastity implies the collaboration first and foremost of the parents, as is the case with formation for the other virtues such as temperance, fortitude, and prudence. Chastity cannot exist as a virtue without the capacity to renounce self, to make sacrifices, and to wait.
- Insofar as it entails sincere self-giving, it is obvious that growth in love is helped by that discipline of the feelings, passions, and emotions which leads us to self-mastery. One cannot give what one does not possess. If the person is not master of self — through the virtues and, in a concrete way, through chastity — he or she lacks that self-possession which makes self-giving possible. Chastity is the spiritual power which frees love from selfishness and aggression. To the degree that a person weakens chastity, his or her love becomes more and more selfish, that is, satisfying a desire for pleasure and no longer self-giving.
- A Christian education for chastity within the family cannot remain silent about the moral gravity involved in separating the unitive dimension from the procreative dimension within married life. This happens above all in contraception and artificial procreation. In the first case one intends to seek sexual pleasure, intervening in the conjugal act to avoid conception; in the second case conception is sought by substituting the conjugal act with a technique. These are actions contrary to the truth of married love and contrary to full communion between husband and wife.
- Parents must find time to be with their children and take time to talk with them. As a gift and a commitment, children are their most important task, although seemingly not always a very profitable one. Children are more important than work, entertainment, and social position. In these conversations — more and more as the years pass — parents should learn how to listen carefully to their children, how to make the effort to understand them and how to recognize the fragment of truth that may be present in some forms of rebellion.
- The practice of decency and modesty in speech, action, and dress is very important for creating an atmosphere suitable for the growth of chastity, but this must be well motivated by respect for one's own body and the dignity of others. Parents, as we have said, should be watchful so that certain immoral fashions and attitudes do not violate the integrity of the home, especially through misuse of the mass media.

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- *Each child is a unique and unrepeatable person and must receive individualized formation.* Since parents know, understand, and love each of their children in their uniqueness, they are in the best position to decide what the appropriate time is for providing a variety of information, according to their children's physical and spiritual growth. No one can take this capacity for discernment away from conscientious parents.
- The normal and fundamental method already proposed in this guide is *personal dialogue between parents and their children, that is, individual formation within the family circle.* In fact there is no substitute for a dialogue of trust and openness between parents and their children, a dialogue which respects not only their stages of development but also the young persons as individuals. However, when parents seek help from others, there are various useful methods which can be recommended in the light of parental experience and in conformity with Christian prudence.
- In the first place, parents must reject *secularized and antinatalist sex education*, which puts God at the margin of life and regards the birth of a child as a threat. This sex education is spread by large organizations and international associations that promote abortion, sterilization, and contraception. These organizations want to impose a false lifestyle against the truth of human sexuality. Working at national or state levels, these organizations try to arouse the fear of the "threat of overpopulation" among children and young people to promote the contraceptive mentality, that is, the "anti-life" mentality. They spread false ideas about "reproductive health" and "sexual and reproductive rights" of young people. Another abuse occurs whenever sex education is given to children by teaching them all the intimate details of genital relationships, even in a graphic way. Today this is often motivated by wanting to provide education for "safe sex," above all in relation to the spread of AIDS. In this situation parents must also reject the promotion of so-called "safe sex" or "safer sex," a dangerous and immoral policy based on the deluded theory that the condom can provide adequate protection against AIDS. Parents must insist on continence outside marriage and fidelity in marriage as the only true and secure education for the prevention of this contagious disease.

The document provides what it calls four "working principles," which it says should always be operative whenever matters related to sexuality are taught:

1. Human sexuality is a sacred mystery and must be presented according to the doctrinal and moral teaching of the Church, always bearing in mind the effects of original sin.
2. Only information proportionate to each phase of their individual development should be presented to children and young people.

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3. No material of an erotic nature should be presented to children or young people of any age, individually or in a group.
4. No one should ever be invited, let alone obliged, to act in any way that could objectively offend against modesty or that could subjectively offend against his or her own delicacy or sense of privacy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Whitehead, K.D. "Sex Education: Vatican Guidelines."

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APPENDIX 2: 4 Teaching Strategies for Sex and Relationship Education

(An extract from **Sex and Relationship Education Guidance: Ref: DfEE 0116/2000** (July 2000))

Practical strategies, materials and tasks are detailed in the PHSE and Science Schemes of work. This section provides an excellent summary of strategies for teaching sex and relationship education.

Ground rules

A set of ground rules will help teachers create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from pupils. Ground rules might be developed as part of the school's sex and relationship education policy or individually with each class or year group. For example, one class worked out this set of ground rules together:

- no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question;
- no one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
- only the correct names for body parts will be used; and
- meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Distancing techniques

Teachers can avoid embarrassment and protect pupils' privacy by always depersonalising discussions. For example, role play can be used to help pupils 'act out' situations. Case studies with invented characters, appropriate videos, and visits to theatre in education groups can all help pupils discuss sensitive issues and develop their decision-making skills in a safe environment.

Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Many teachers are concerned about responding to unexpected questions or comments from pupils in a whole-class situation. Having a set of ground rules should reduce the chances of this happening but teachers will need support and training so that they are prepared for the unexpected. For example:

- If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as a school counsellor, school nurse, helpline, or an outside agency or service;
- If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the pupil or teacher or both together research the question later;
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the pupil will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information.

To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the pupil later; and if a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's child protection procedures.

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Discussion and project learning

Research into what makes sex and relationship education effective shows that discussion and project learning encourages learning and is enjoyed by pupils. Pupils take part in a structured activity in which they can:

- draw on previous knowledge to develop more understanding;
- practise their social and personal skills;
- consider their beliefs and attitudes about different topics;
- reflect on their new learning; and
- plan and shape future action.

Active learning is most effective when pupils are working in groups. Methods include discussion techniques such as the use of circle time in primary schools, case studies and project work.

Reflection

Reflecting is crucial for learning as it encourages pupils to consolidate what they have learned and to form new understanding, skills and attitudes.

Teachers can help pupils reflect on their learning by asking questions like these:

- _ What was it like doing this discussion today?
- _ What did you learn from the others, especially those who had a different experience or belief from your own?
- _ What do you think you will be able to do as a result of this discussion?
- _ What else do you think you need to think or learn about?