

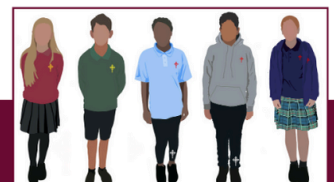


CARDINAL NEWMAN
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Spring 2026

Date of Next Review: July 2027

**Relationships and Sex Education
Policy**



Caritas | Excellence | Together

Common Good | Common Home | Dignity | Solidarity | Subsidiarity | Participation

POLICY FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)

Drafted by: Principal and Governors
 Approved by Governors: Teaching and learning committee
 Next Review: July 2027

John 10:10 – “I came that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

Jesus does not promise an easy life, but a **full one**—rich in meaning, anchored in love, and open to hope. When He speaks of “life to the full,” He is not talking about more possessions, greater status, or constant happiness. He is offering something deeper: **a life rooted in truth, purpose, and relationship with Him.**

To live fully is to live **in communion**—with God, with others, and with ourselves. It means discovering who we are as God’s beloved, created in His image, and called to love generously, forgive freely, and walk with courage. It is a life that embraces joy, sorrow, service, and trust—knowing that nothing is wasted in God’s plan.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

“God is love, and he who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him” (1 Jn 4:16)

Our mission is to provide an excellent Catholic education for all our students which enables them to respond to the call of Christ throughout their lives. Caritas– the love which is God– is the gold thread running through everything we do.

We welcome and accept all our students and staff as unique individuals created in the image of God. We treat one another with kindness and respect. We are a community of Caritas where everyone feels safe, supported and inspired to make a difference in our local, national and global communities. We strive for the highest quality of learning and teaching that inspires us all to discover and develop our God-given gifts and talents, to excel in the present and aim high in the future.

Our three Newman values are;

Caritas– I have been created for a specific purpose

Excellence– I always aim for my personal best

Together– I am a link in a chain

We are involved in PSHE/ 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 our PSHE/RSE curriculum. Our approach to PSHE/RSE is rooted in the Catholic Church’s teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

Consultation and communication

In developing this policy and preparing for its implementation the Governing body was committed to consulting and engaging with all stakeholders.

- pupil focus groups including House Captains, Form Captains, Ambassador Groups and questionnaire responses
- questionnaires to parents / carers and consultation meetings
- review of RSE curriculum content with staff and students
- consultation with wider school community including feeder primary school and parishes
- consultation with school governors

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors in the Spring term of 2026. This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Governing Body and RSE Lead. The next review date is July 2027.

Dissemination

The draft policy will be given 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 a copy is available in the school PSHE office.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)

The DfE guidance states that "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".¹ It is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of her or him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience.

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 and 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)."²

STATUTORY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

We are legally required to teach those aspects of RSE which are statutory parts of National Curriculum Science. (There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. This does not apply to academies).

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

¹ Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education; Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers p.4

² Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education; Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers p.25

RATIONALE

We are involved in relationships and sex education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. We believe 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 RSE is therefore 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. RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of a 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) 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 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 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 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 the 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, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state 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"³ which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

³ *Gravissimum Educationis* 1

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 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;
- 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 manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

Outcomes

INCLUSION AND DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' 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 pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children 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.

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 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.

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. This is delivered through our form tutor PSHE programme and in cross-curricular work which includes themes as outlined below;

- Careers & the future
- Ourselves and our family
- Staying safe on line
- RSE (having safe and loving relationships)
- Healthy living (physical and mental health)
- Citizenship/rights/responsibilities

Full detail of this programme can be found in the appendix to this policy.

PROGRAMME / RESOURCES

Appendices to this policy provide further information about the programme and resources for suggested use.

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- trigger warnings
- 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 school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Parents/carers will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents will be consulted before this policy is ratified by the governors. They will be consulted when changes are made to the RSE curriculum, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme on request. Our aim is that, at the end of the consultation process, every parent and carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

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. (See [DfE RSHE Guidance](#) Page 6: right to withdraw, Page 11: sex education for details about sex education and section 5.3 about how to withdraw a child from Sex Education lessons). Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the RSE lead Ms Lorna Marsh or, during the Year 9 RSE lessons, Ms Catherine McManus.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

BALANCED CURRICULUM

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

Pupils 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 teaching. We will ensure that pupils 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 lies with the Assistant Headteacher and RSE lead Ms Lorna Marsh and the Assistant Headteacher and RE lead Ms Catherine McManus. It is also supported in cross-curricular work with the Religious Education, Science, English and PE departments. PSHE and RSE lessons will be delivered by Form tutors and RE teachers, a team of well trained staff who know the children well.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE 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.

External Visitors

Our school 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 CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'.⁴

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.

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.

Principal

The Principal 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 Co-Ordinator

The PSHE/RSE co-ordinator with the Principal 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 a whole school issue. 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. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE. All staff have been included in the development of this policy and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

⁴ CES Checklist for external speakers

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, anti-bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc)

Pupils 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 pupils.

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 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.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be matters 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 pupils, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion.

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 pupils 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 senior member of staff responsible.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE

All governors, all teachers, all support staff, all parents and all pupils 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 pupils 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 which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such

circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, head teacher, but that the pupils would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The RSE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils' work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires and by discussion with pupils, 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 and it will be regularly reviewed.

Progression aim: Establish emotional safety, respect for self and others.

Year 8 – Development
Focus: Identity, consent, boundaries, responsibility

	Careers	Ourselves and Family	Staying safe online/ in the world	RSE	Healthy living (physical and mental health)	Community/rights/ responsibilities
Year 8	<p>To learn about a range of careers that they can start to consider for the future.</p> <p>To consider their God given talents and how these might best suit certain careers.</p> <p>To start to think about which GCSE subjects they might want to take in the future to best suit these career choices.</p> <p>To focus on certain key role models who inspire them.</p>	<p>Self-respect, body confidence and managing emotions</p> <p>To recognise that we will all experience times of difficulty and to understand how best to deal with these</p> <p>To consider the responsibility, I have towards myself to always make sensible and wise choices</p> <p>To explore what it means to be happy and healthy within a family unit</p> <p>To know why there can be conflict within families and to understand how best to deal with these</p> <p>To explore what it means to lead a family responsibly</p>	<p>Online risks, harassment and reporting concerns</p> <p>To consider why friendships can face challenges and change</p> <p>Understanding bullying, harassment and discrimination</p> <p>To explore the ways in which we can challenge injustice at a national level</p>	<p>To consider what it means to be in a relationship</p> <p>Healthy vs unhealthy relationships</p> <p>To explore how we resolve conflict in relationships</p> <p>Introduction to consent and personal boundaries</p> <p>To understand how to access support if a family member is going through divorce or separation</p> <p>Gender stereotypes and their impact</p>	<p>Puberty, hygiene, HPV, alcohol awareness, safeguarding (FGM awareness)</p> <p>To know the facts about alcohol so they can make safe decisions in the future.</p> <p>To learn about the HPV virus and how to vaccinate against it.</p>	<p>To explore what is meant by refugees and immigrants and to understand why everyone is worthy of love</p> <p>To know what is meant by extremism and to understand why it is the opposite of love</p> <p>To know what is meant by restorative justice and to understand why it helps to rebuild relationships within communities</p> <p>To know how the UK legal system works and to understand how the court system operates</p> <p>To understand what paths to follow as a victim of crime</p>

Progression aim: Develop personal responsibility and safeguarding awareness.

Year 11 – Preparation for adulthood
Focus: Independence, long-term wellbeing, future pathways

	Careers	Staying safe online/ in the world	RSE	Community rights/responsibilities
Year 11	<p>To reflect on who I am at the end of secondary school journey</p> <p>To consider what my next steps are after education</p> <p>To consider College choices and PPE revision</p> <p>To prepare for College Interviews</p> <p>To explore the different skills you have and what career paths they may lead you to</p>	<p>Self-worth, body image and mental health</p> <p>To consider how we can build resilience and find courage in ourselves and in others</p> <p>To explore the potential impact society can have on our view of the body</p> <p>To know how to self-monitor changes and developments in the body</p>	<p>Respectful, committed relationships</p> <p>To understand what a healthy relationship looks like and to understand why it centres on respect</p> <p>Leading family life responsibly</p> <p>Safeguarding in adult relationships</p> <p>Sources of support for those in unhealthy or unsafe relationships</p>	<p>Environmental stewardship</p> <p>To understand the dangers that are facing the environment and us at the moment</p> <p>Democracy, voting and active citizenship</p>

Progression aim: Prepare pupils for healthy, respectful adult life.