



Diocese of Lancaster
Education Service



Human Relationships and Sex Education Policy The Willows Catholic Primary School

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Vision and Mission

With Christ at our heart, we are a loving, caring family where each individual is nurtured in mind and spirit to fully become the person God created.

In learning together, we support each other to reach our potential in a safe and stimulating environment where all are valued and respected.

Our school motto: 'God loves me, God loves everyone' guides our journey.

At The Willows we are inspired by Jesus to be the very best we can be. We look after one another and show respect and love through our relationships with one another. Jesus is invited into our hearts. In the Beatitudes, Jesus invites us to lead a full life with him by explaining what makes people blessed or happy. This is about understanding how loving our neighbour enables us to be happy too. Therefore, having a good relationship with ourselves and the other people in our lives makes us grow and flourish and we respect that everyone is a unique and beautiful part of God's creation. We are all children of God, called to grow in love for him through the person of Jesus Christ and to spread the Good News through the action of the Holy Spirit.

Procedures

In creating this policy, the following groups of people were consulted:

- Teaching staff
- Support staff
- Governing Body
- The Parents' Forum
- Diocesan Education Service
- Parish Priest
- School Council

In consultation with the Governing Body, the policy will be implemented in September 2017, reviewed every two years, by the Head teacher, HRSE coordinator, the Governing Body and school staff.

The next review date is September 2019.

The policy will be circulated to all members of the Governing Body and all members of staff. The school will contain a statement about HRSE teaching and details of where to obtain a full copy of the policy upon request. The Education Service will be sent a copy of the school's HRSE policy and it is the duty of the Governing Body to ensure that this is up to date.

Rationale

As a primary school in the Diocese of Lancaster Education Service, we use the term Human Relationships and Sex Education (HRSE) as we believe that relationships education is about all aspects of growing a fulfilled and happy life, sexual education is a dimension of this greater whole. For example:

The defining belief of Christianity is that God took on human form. This endows the human form with an extraordinary dignity that goes beyond that of all other forms of life and shows that humanity alone can embrace this relationship with God. Therefore, our relationship with our own bodies is not casual but infused with the Holy Spirit. Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in school must be rooted in this belief which is expressed in the Church's teaching about relationships, marriage, sex and family life. The Church offers education to young people as it is part of complete human formation. Education about human love is no less a part of a Catholic school's responsibility than teaching about mathematics or English. At The Willows we teach young people about how to form relationships, including understanding loving relationships and acknowledging that children's first experience of love is in the home. We encourage children from the earliest age to recognise that they are all children of God and that each person shares a God given dignity. As children mature, we encourage them to follow the example of Jesus and live lives inspired by the Gospel virtues, enabling them to follow His commandment to "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:31). This is the basis for all relationships in our school. Teaching about relationships in our school is supported by Christian virtue teaching as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in line with 'Fit for Mission? Schools'.

The Department for Education (2000) suggests that sex and relationship education should build on the children's own experiences, be sensitive to the specific domestic contexts the children come from, form attitudes and values towards relationships, develop personal and social skills and increase the knowledge and understanding of each young person as they grow about their relationships and well-being, including sexual health. The Diocese of Lancaster supports all these aims in educating about relationships and sex education though recognises that the Church's objectives in this are about complete human formation.

Statutory Framework

The statutory framework that surrounds education about human relationships largely falls within three key areas:

- The National Curriculum (2014)
- Statutory Guidance: 'Sex and Relationships Education Guidance' (2000)
- The Children's Act (2004)

Additionally, non-statutory guidance directs policy and guides the work of OFSTED as it seeks to promote what perceived as best practice, which may go beyond the limits of what is statute.

The table below sets out the different aspects of the statutory framework and those that apply to us as a school:

Whole Curriculum	All state-funded schools must offer a broad and balanced curriculum which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical develop of all pupils. • prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)	All schools should make provision for PSHE, drawing on best practice. Schools are free to develop their own PSHE programme to reflect the needs of their pupils.
Sex and Relationships Education Guidance	Any school that provides SRE has a statutory duty to have due regard to Sex and Relationships Education Guidance DfEE 2000.
National Curriculum	Statutory sex education forms part of the science programme of study across Key Stage One, Two and Three.
Sex and Relationships Education Policy	DfEE Guidance (2000) states that all schools should have an up to date SRE policy available for inspections and on request for parents or carers.

Before children make the transition to high school they will have a specific puberty session, delivered with the school nurses covering the following areas, underpinned by the teachings of the Catholic faith:

- The changes they can expect to see to their body and appearance during puberty
- Periods
- The importance of personal hygiene and a healthy diet

All areas and topics of discussion have been carefully developed with the school nurses and ensure that everything which is covered and discussed is in line with the teachings of the Catholic Faith.

Each session is delivered by the class teachers, school nurses and either Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

Prior to the children receiving this sessions, parents are invited into school to experience what their children will be told. During these sessions, parents are reminded that as a school, we respect that parents are the first educators of their children and as such, some areas of their children's development is delegated to them. Likewise, the parents have the opportunity to hear some of the questions children have asked in previous years and the responses they have been given by the school nurses and teachers.

Virtues and Values

Gospel virtues and values underpin the HRSE curriculum. The Christian tradition describes behaviours or habits that lead to happiness, human flourishing and a closer relationship with God as virtues. These virtues are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and fall into two groups. The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (sometimes love is used instead) are about developing the habits of being open to the work of the Holy Spirit and developing a deeper relationship with God through living a balanced and happy, good life. The cardinal virtues of practical wisdom (prudence), justice, fortitude and temperance help people develop habits of reason, fairness, emotional resilience and self-mastery. They are human virtues and, as such, are part of the development of people of all faiths or none as they learn how to flourish, thrive and to have a life supported by strong and caring relationships. The cardinal virtues are drawn from the teachings of Plato and Aristotle and are held in common with people of many faiths and secular beliefs. St. Thomas Aquinas attributes the theological virtues as having their foundation in God, they complete the cardinal virtues and are the way people can reach "the abundant life" (John 10:10).

At The Willows we live out the Gospel values shared in the Beatitudes, throughout the life of school by holding the values of the Gospels at the heart of everything we do. Every person is treated as an individual, created in God's image, with love and dignity as core values.

All members of staff model how we expect children and families to behave towards each other; for example, saying thank you to God, being happy and cheerful, caring for others in a similar way to how Jesus cared for others. This attitude is underpinned in our behaviour policy. Children are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour, good or bad, and consider how Jesus' teachings would expect us to behave, then if necessary, rectify a situation.

As pupils progress through Key Stage Two they develop a deeper understanding of what is moral behaviour and they are able to say why this is important for personal happiness and for a closer relationship with God. In addition, children are given opportunities to learn how prayer enables them to make space for God in their lives and opportunities for reflection and growth.

By the end of Year 6 children are able to explain their behaviour choices, making reference to their beliefs and values, for example, Jesus' teachings about forgiveness.

The Aim and Objectives of HRSE

The aim of HRSE is part of our aim to educate the complete human person. This is expressed in *Fit for mission? Schools* (2009).

The fundamental needs of the human person are the focus of Catholic education – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual, and eschatological (Our eternal destiny).

These fundamental needs can only be truly fulfilled through a rich and living encounter with the deepest truths about God and the human person. This is why Christ and His Gospel are the foundation of the school, because He is 'the perfect Man in whom all human values find their fullest perfection' (Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*).

Therefore, The Willows is called to keep the Gospel whole and alive amongst pupils, families, and staff.

The aim and objectives of HRSE at The Willows is to:

- develop self-respect and love of self.
- invite young people to develop and deepen a loving relationship with God.
- invite young people to understand that their life has a purpose.
- invite young people to develop and deepen relationships with each other based on mutual respect and care, and to understand this can be an expression of God's love.
- foster an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church about how to live a full life, a life of virtue and the place of human sexuality in living a full life, marriage and parenthood.
- have a strong awareness of their own safety and the nature of consent.
- have an understanding of the law in England about Equality and Marriage, appropriate to their age and maturity.

In teaching children about healthy relationships and sex education we will:

- seek to develop attitudes of awe and wonder for the gift and beauty of self, respect for each other as children of God and rejoice in the goodness of God's creation.
- seek to develop attitudes of responsibility towards ourselves and others, recognising, the dignity in all.
- seek to enable children to understand the choices they make and how they can help or harm themselves and others.
- encourage children to learn about expressing their own emotions and being respectful of the emotions and behaviours of others.
- encourage the whole school to be like a loving family, recognising God as a merciful and generous father as Jesus taught in the Lord's prayer.
- encourage everyone in the school to recognise their part in the school family and work together for reconciliation when relations in the school falter.
- encourage everyone in the school to value humility, mercy and compassion and to respond with empathy to the problems of others.
- develop children's knowledge of when to say 'no' to behaviours or attitudes that may harm their dignity or the dignity of others and to be responsible for their own safety.
- develop children experience of what it is to be happy so that they begin to understand the difference between happiness and gratification and value patience.

- teach children about the media and their choices, about what to watch, what games to play, what rules apply and the dignity of all does not just apply to people who are physically seen, it applies to their online relationships too.
- support children when relationships in their lives are challenging and teach them that there are people in school who will listen if they are experiences that make them frightened or uncomfortable.
- foster an atmosphere in school which celebrates the work of the Trinity through the life of the school and its relationship with the Church.
- teach children about the beauty of the Church's teaching about love and God's love for them which is shared in the Sacraments.
- sensitively share the Church's teaching about the importance of marriage and family life as a way to live in loving relationships with other and with God.

Inclusion

At The Willows we identify that young people mature in different ways. Our teaching about relationships and sexuality is respectful of each child's starting point, their faith, culture and sexual orientation. Lessons are framed by this understanding and young people are encouraged to respect difference and develop an approach of dialogue.

As a school community we love each other, just as God wanted us to. Therefore, all children and staff feel valued and know that there is support available for anyone who may need it. At The Willows no one will be made to feel different or excluded because of their beliefs, values or sexual orientation, for example, transgender pupils.

Equality

The governing body has wide obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and will work to ensure that The Willows endeavours to do its best for all of the pupils, irrespective of ability (physical and mental), race, ethnicity, nationality, maternity, pregnancy, sex, gender identity or orientation or whether they are looked after children.

The school's equality policy is available on the school website.

Programme of Study

The Diocese of Lancaster has a programme of study for its family of schools. The programme ranges from ages 2-19 years and provides suggested areas of study and outcomes for the young people it serves. This programme will be taught in discreet lessons, in cross curricular lessons, particularly R.E. and science and fundamentally embedded in the ethos of the school through assemblies, classroom discussions and the centring of all relationships in school on the person of Jesus Christ. The programme of study is based on the teachings of the Church and aims to help young people develop their sense of purpose and character. It is taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and allows children to express alternative beliefs and viewpoints where they hold such views. The programme of study will be supported by published resources, recommended by the Diocese, as well as those created by the school. A list of recommended resources is available on the Education Service website.

As a school, as with any other subject, a range of teaching strategies are employed to ensure that all children are engaged and able to access the curriculum at a level appropriate to their ability. That said, given the nature of some topics as the children progress through the school, it may become necessary for teachers to establish clear ground rules and expectations with children for some discussions.

All HRSE lessons will take into account the teachings of the Catholic church and the school's safeguarding policy.

Children's knowledge and understanding will be assessed as per any other subject; using plenaries, formative assessment and quality first teaching. Formal assessment will take place as part of the RE and Science curriculum.

Parents

The Church recognises parents as the first educators of their children. The Willows supports parents in this task. The role of the school should be that of assisting and completing the work of parents, furnishing children with an evaluation of "sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God". (Educational Guidance in Human Love (1983) Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education n69) Children's first experience of relationships and love are in the home. At The Willows we seek to work with parents and support them as their children grow and begin to develop their own character as well as experiencing changes in their physical appearance.

The Parents' Forum was consulted, prior to the governing body ratifying this policy, and asked to seek further feedback from the parents within the classes which they represent.

Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their children from HRSE lessons, however, they are not able to withdraw their children from statutory science lessons. When a child enters upper Key Stage Two, parents will be consulted and asked to give their consent for their child to take part in some aspects of sex education in line with national guidance.

The school will involve and support parents in learning about HRSE by sharing the programme of study as appropriate, letters when visitors are coming to school, letters when a sensitive subject is to be taught, resources to use at home, information in on school website etc.

Information about HRSE is contained on the school's website and the majority of the programme of study is developed through the ethos of the school. However, at times, areas of particular sensitivity, such as puberty, will benefit from additional parental support and at such times, letters will be sent home and parents will be invited into school to discuss the content of future HRSE lessons.

Teaching HRSE

Mr. Laurie Sharrock is responsible for the leadership, coordination and monitoring of the implementation of this policy supported by the school's Senior Leadership Team and the HRSE Governor, Mr. David Harrison.

Class teachers and support staff will receive training on the expected delivery of the HRSE programme of study and will receive support from Mr. Sharrock and the Senior Leadership Team as necessary. At times, it may be appropriate for other agencies, the school nurse for example, to support particular classes with the content of the HRSE programme of study. Any such visitor will be prompted to read this policy and agree to follow its instruction.

That said, all staff are involved with and committed to fostering attitudes, living out Gospel virtues and shaping behaviour based on a Christian understanding of how to lead a good life. Staff are called to be role models of the school's ethos in their relationships with other staff members, parents, governors, children and the wider community. Staff who are not Catholic themselves must conduct their behaviour in school in accordance with the vision and mission of the school.

Teaching and learning about human relationships will be part of the life of the school. However, the programme of study will be taught through cross curricular dimensions where appropriate, such as RE, science and computing.

Supporting children and young people deemed to be at risk

Sensitive subjects in HRSE always need to be framed so that the young people who are participating know that there is pastoral support if any of the issues discussed make them feel the need to talk further or share confidential information. This should always be done within the safeguarding framework of the school and it is paramount that all staff teaching HRSE have up to date safeguarding professional development.

Questions asked by students that are a cause for concern for the teacher or any other member of staff or visitor, for example because of their explicit or graphic content, should be addressed in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy and confidentiality procedures. These procedures can be found in the school's safeguarding policy which is available from the school website or the Headteacher.