

# **ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**



## **SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY**

Reviewed: April 2012

Review Date: July 2013

## **Information about school**

St Catherine's is a mixed sex comprehensive Catholic School for students aged 11-16 years. It is the only secondary Catholic school in Halifax and at present draws students from six catholic primary schools within Halifax. It also attracts some students from primary schools in other parts of Calderdale and up to 21 other primary schools.

Consultation process: Sex Education Policy reviewed by Co-ordinator of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Head of Science, Head of Religious Education and Governor's Curriculum Committee.

## **Sex Education and the School's Mission Statement**

St Catherine's Catholic High School, in partnership with parents/carers, aims to provide an education, which reflects the life, values and teachings of Jesus Christ, within the moral, spiritual and doctrinal tradition of the Catholic Church.

In so doing, the school will endeavour to:

- give all students and staff the opportunities to develop their potential spiritually, academically and socially
- put daily prayer, worship and liturgy as a central part in the life of the school
- ensure that we provide equality of opportunity by developing a curriculum, which caters for the particular needs of students
- offer a curriculum based on effective teaching which is equally concerned with Christian values as with knowledge and skills
- encourage all members of the school to respect and value themselves and others
- encourage relationships which, at all levels of the school community, are based on respect, love and forgiveness
- work to develop a sense of responsibility for and awareness of the needs of others through families, parishes and the wider community
- create a safe, caring, challenging and enjoyable environment where students will be helped towards readiness for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life

The Mission Statement reflects our commitment to the development of our students as sons and daughters of God. As such it is easily related to our Sex Education programme.

The Church has always recognised that it is the privilege and responsibility of the family to inform and educate their children, particularly in areas of sexual development. As a school we play an important role in supporting the work of parents/carers. Any advice and guidance given to students will reflect the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church and be firmly based on the Church's teaching.

## **The Aims of our Sex Education Policy**

Our students should:

- understand their own emotional and physical development
- understand the teaching of the Catholic Church on all aspects of human sexuality and the sanctity of life
- understand the processes of human reproduction, foetal development, pregnancy and birth in the context of Christian, family and loving frameworks
- develop an understanding of their own feelings and those of others
- examine and accept their responsibilities towards themselves and others
- develop their feelings of self-worth
- develop decision making skills to allow them to make informed and moral decisions about human procreation and related matters
- develop a critical awareness of the media in influencing attitudes and values concerning sexual behaviour
- participate in education about Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Anti Immune Deficiency System (AIDS) and other sexually transmitted diseases
- develop an understanding of the problems of AIDS sufferers

## **Parents/Carers**

If special lessons or talks are being planned which specifically relate to this area of study, every effort will be taken to inform parents/carers by letter in advance.

Parents/carers may withdraw their children from any or all parts of the school's programme of Sex Education other than those sections, which are required by the National Curriculum Science Order.

If any parent has a particular concern regarding the content or delivery of any aspect of the Sex Education Programme they should in the first instance contact the Headteacher at the school.

## **The Moral Framework**

Sex Education in a school context is an opportunity to help young people deal with the explicit and hidden sexual messages and images they receive through the media and from their peers.

Sex Education in our school is offered in the context of education in personal relationships and in accordance with the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

We assert the positive value and importance of encouraging students to defer sexual activity and to keep sexual intercourse as an expression of intimacy within marriage.

To help our students with the development of their consciences we will include discussion of different choices and life styles, and encourage them to make balanced judgements of contemporary social and sexual issues.

The Church's insistence, as outlined in the Documents of the Second Vatican Council, on the dignity of the human person and the central importance of the family as the school of love and 'the domestic church', will be central to our teaching. The following statements form the basis of our programme:

- every individual is uniquely valuable in his/her own right
- sexual decisions have social and moral implications
- sexual intercourse is an expression of intimacy within marriage
- both male and female have equal rights and responsibilities in sexual matters
- sexual responsibility is incompatible with unwanted pregnancies and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases
- the paramount importance of chastity, loyalty, fidelity, love and commitment

The programme has been based on the recommendations of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of England and Wales and it draws heavily on the Diocese of Leeds 'Education in Personal Relationships' (EPR) Programme. It is based on sound educational principles and moral values. The material chosen and the content of the course have been carefully selected to match the stage of maturity and the development of the students.

However it is dealt with, Sex Education will be presented in the context of family life, of loving relationships, and of respect for others; in short, in a moral framework.

### **Content of the Programme of Study**

#### **Year 7**

##### **Science**

**Growing up:** Foetal development - Mechanical - Changes in puberty.

##### **PSHE**

- Examines physical and emotional changes as people grow and develop.
- Religion and Sex Education.
- Relationships and Responsibility: self-identity, family, what affects them (including Media), changes, conflict and resolution.

#### **Year 8**

##### **Science**

**Health Unit:** Studies of the spread and prevention of infectious and non-infectious disease includes sexual transmission of disease and AIDS

## **Year 8**

### **PSHE**

- Re-examines physical and emotional changes as people grow and develop.
- Religion, Law and Sex Education.
- Relationships and Responsibilities: attributes, stereotyping, gender differences, emotional well-being, peer pressure, assertiveness, parenthood, Internet and safety.

**Project Work:** Human Growth and Development

## **Year 9**

### **PSHE**

- Relationships and Responsibilities: gender roles, stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination (including the Law), HIV/AIDS and Parenthood.

## **Year 10**

### **PSHE**

- Re-examines physical and emotional changes as people grow and develop.
- Relationships and Responsibilities: self-identity, health and well-being, Sexually Transmitted Infections, sources of help and support, Love and Marriage.

## **Year 10 and 11**

### **Religious Education**

Responsible parenthood within marriage and the sanctity of life are considered within the following units:

marriage  
right to life  
contraception  
abortion  
euthanasia

There is a significant contribution to the programme from the English Department in Years 9 to 11 in the areas of:

- understanding of concept of moral values and comparisons with different groups and cultures
- awareness of issues such as conception, birth, HIV/AIDS and abortion
- awareness of issues such as marriage, divorce, bereavement, sexual harassment
- changing nature of relationships within a family as children grow older.

## Year 11

### Science

Recap from Key Stage 3 on reproduction cycle in detail. Genetics - Menstrual - Hormones.

A re-examination of reproduction and foetal development.

### PSHE

- Relationships and Responsibilities: Self identity (including body image), stereotyping, Media, self esteem, emotional health and well-being, HIV/AIDS.
- Religion, contraception and abortion.

Revision of the programme of study is continual - changes will be made as necessary.

### References

- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance - DfEE 0116/2000
- Sex and Relationship Education: Support for School Governors - January 2010.
- Sex and Relationship Education in Schools - OFSTED 2006.
- Sex and Relationship Education - Sex Education Matters 2002.

### SEX EDUCATION

#### SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR TEACHING STAFF

There are two areas of particular significance for teaching staff:

#### A **Confidentiality**

By virtue of their profession, teachers gain the trust and respect of the children they teach. Some children, burdened with a problem, may wish to disclose information of a personal and sensitive nature, seeking help and advice. Such disclosures may place teachers in professional, moral or legal dilemmas. Before a child makes any disclosure, the teacher must explain that it may not be possible to keep the information totally confidential and that it may be necessary to seek help and advice from other professionals. Only if the child agrees to this should the disclosure be made. If the child feels unable to continue with the discussion he/she should be counselled to seek the help of parents/carers, close relative, School Nurse or other establish agency.

#### B. **Teachings of the Church**

The ethos and teachings of this school are firmly rooted in the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church. Any advice given to children must clearly reflect the teaching of the Church. If teachers feel that their own views, beliefs or personal persuasions prevent them from doing this they should

either refer the child to a member of the RE staff, Progress and Learning Manager (PaLM) or Deputy Head, or seek the advice of one of these colleagues.

### **Background - Recent Legislation**

Sex Education in the light of Circular No 5/94: 'Education Act 2011: Sex Education in Schools'. Circular 5/94 describes recent and existing legislation on sex and sex education, and in addition offers advice under the following headings:

- statutory provisions
- role of parents/carers
- moral framework
- the context of sex education
- developing a school policy on sex education
- implementing sex education policies and programmes.

The most important change from the point of view of our work is the provision giving parents/carers the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of a school's programme of sex education, other than those elements required by the National Curriculum Science Order.

### **Key Stage 3**

- the human reproductive system
- menstrual cycle
- fertilisation and the role of the placenta
- how the foetus develops in the uterus
- the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence.

### **Key Stage 4**

- effects of sex hormones.

The law does not define the content of sex education, but the circular suggests that it might comprise:

- HIV/AIDS
- sexually transmitted diseases
- contraception
- sexual attitudes: emotional and ethical dimensions
- human reproduction.

### **Liaison with Feeder Primary Schools**

- All Primary Schools will receive a copy of this policy document
- Discussion of sex education will form part of the Primary liaison process
- The school nurse works at both Primary and Secondary level, forming a valuable link.

## **Outside Agencies and Visitors**

- Visiting providers should give a clear explanation of the part they are to play in the sex education programme. They should have a copy of this policy document prior to the visit
- A teacher should stay in the classroom when an outside provider is used.

## **Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) and PSHE**

SRE within PSHE is in its infancy and is now taught as: a discreet subject, through the Form Study Programme, in conjunction with RE and Science and is continually being reviewed by the school.

A resource bank has been established and is continually being updated and is available for parents/carers/governors to borrow.

Signed:

Mr M Gosling  
(Executive Headteacher)

Mr T Miskell  
(Chair of Governors)

Date ratified by Governing Body: 19 April 2012

Date to be reviewed: March 2013