

RSHE policy



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Approved by Governing body: February 2024

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Mission Statement

St William of Perth aims to nourish the growth of all its members as persons illuminated by the light of Christ as our Catholic values permeate all aspects of school life.

Our mission is to provide a quality education where high standards of attainment and behaviour are expected. We encourage all our pupils to develop as life-long learners as they strive to reach their full physical, intellectual and social potential.

Life to the full

Catholic education has something important to say about Relationship and Health Education. Christ's command 'Love one another as I have loved you', is the key and foundation for human and spiritual fulfilment and happiness. As human beings created body and spirit, our whole personality is shaped by our sexuality. 'Male and female he made them, in his own image he made them'. Relationship and sex education, therefore, is a fundamental entitlement of our children and young people and the family is the central context in which this education takes place.

We believe that 'God saw all that he had made and found it very good' and that includes our bodies and our sexuality, which in its widest sense is his gift to us. In growing up, children and young people gradually experience and become fully aware of themselves. As a Catholic community, we want to support their personal and spiritual development by offering them a mature and well rounded approach to the difficult questions that they face with regard to the appropriate expression of their love for others. The unconditional loving intimacy of husband and wife are the model that Christ proposed and we bear witness to his teaching, while being able to understand that in our society and among our young people, different models and approaches often arise and raise questions. We offer a listening ear, a warm hearted approach and a faith that inspires us to see in our humanity the place where God reveals his love.

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full'
John 10:10

Our belief in the unique dignity of the human person as made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in our Catholic school. Our approach to RHE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and is presented positively and prudently.

Stemming from this vision of what it means to be human, we seek to educate the whole child: spiritually, intellectually, morally, emotionally, psychologically, and physically towards our understanding of Christian maturity. Through RHE, children come to understand more about themselves, others and the beauty of Creation.

Following guidance from our own Southwark Diocese, RHE in our school will be concerned primarily with nurturing the human wholeness of our pupils and in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family, recognising that most families include a mother, a father and children but some families do not. It will also recognise different types of relationship, including those between acquaintances, friends, relatives and families. It will acknowledge that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected and their views listened to and responded to in order to ensure that their confidence and self-esteem will be strengthened.

Teaching high quality RHE is essential in creating an inclusive ethos and is central to developing healthy relationships and behaviours where children are able to assess and manage risk.

Working with Parents/Carers

It is essential that RHE is communicated to and taught in conjunction with the parents/carers of our pupils, as we recognise that parents/carers are the natural primary educators of their children. The views of parents/carers are actively sought, allowing their voice to be heard and responded to.

As set out in the Baptism Rite, schools recognise that parents/carers are the first and foremost educators of their children. We also recognise that good communication and consultation with parents/carers is vital.

Aims of Relationship and Health Education (RHE) in Catholic schools

Tenten's principles

1. RHE is about the 'whole person'. Emotional, social, moral, spiritual and physical elements of our selves all make up who we are.
2. We become close to the image and likeness of God through our relationship with others. The body is capable of making visible what is invisible.
3. Our bodies are good.
4. Catholic RHE is taught in partnership with parents.
5. Our deepest identity is as a child of God- created, chosen and loved by God.
6. Story can change hearts and minds.
7. Catholic RHE is an education in virtue.
8. Catholic RHE is an education in conscience.
9. Prayer and the sacraments fuel the teaching of RHE.

Through RHE, children will learn:

- To grow in self-respect, sense of self worth and uniqueness, acknowledging we are all created in the image and likeness of God.
- To develop an understanding that love is the central basis of relationships.
- To understand the nature of relationships and to encourage them to reflect on their own relationships and respect similarities and differences between people.
- To develop their confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.
- To acquire the skills necessary to develop and sustain relationships.
- Health and sex education at an age-appropriate level.
- To know their body, learn the names of the main body parts(including head, neck, arms, elbows, legs, knees, face, ears, eyes, hair, mouth, teeth) and say which part of their body is associated with each sense. Include the introduction of genitals and describe the changes as humans develop to old age.
- To be prepared for puberty and the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that adult life will bring.
- How to keep themselves safe, protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed.
- To develop a healthier, safer lifestyle.
- To play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom/reign of God.

Delivery of RHE

At St William of Perth, RHE will be delivered using the Southwark Diocese approved scheme, '***Life to the full***'- ***tenten resources*** alongside the teaching of RE through 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'. RHE will be taught over a number of sessions across the academic year from Year R to 6.

During the delivery of RHE, sensitive issues may arise and when dealing with these issues and questions, teachers will use their professional judgement and will answer questions honestly but with due regard given to the nature of the question and the age and maturity of the questioner. Careful consideration will be given to the wide and varied experience and backgrounds of the pupils in their care.

In some cases, it may be inappropriate for the teacher to respond to a specific question and the pupil will be referred to his/her parents/carers. In the same way, not all questions will be answered publicly and the teacher will need to assess the appropriateness of the question to consider if it matches the maturity and understanding of the whole class group.

Teachers should never feel pressured into discussing their personal views or experiences with children and/or parents and should always respect the sensitivity of their position as a teacher in a Catholic school.

If there are any concerns regarding how to respond to questions or issues that do arise, staff are directed to the Head teacher Mr J Willis and Deputy Head and RHE lead Mrs A Kinslow for advice and support.

Roles and responsibilities

DSL & DDSLs

The school has procedures and policies in place to deal with any sensitive issues or pupils thought to be vulnerable. All staff will pass on any concerns of this nature to the designated child protection officer in school.

Governors/ Parish priest/Parents

In accordance with the Education Act of 1993, the Governing Body has the responsibility to keep up to date the school's policy for RHE. The policy is created in consultation with governors as well as the Parish priest and parents/carers.

Teachers

All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they will actively contribute to the guidance of the physical, moral, spiritual well-being of their pupils. Teachers will be expected to teach RHE in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school. Appropriate training has been made available to all staff teaching RHE and will continue to be reviewed and developed.

School nurse

In the final term of years 5 and 6, the school nurse may visit to deliver a further session to delve a little deeper into the topic of bodies, how they change during puberty and details of menstruation. Boys and girls are separated to give each group a forum within which they can ask more specific questions within a safe environment.

Programme

St William of Perth's Catholic Primary School has agreed to follow the programme '**Life to the full**' as recommended by the Southwark Diocese. Any DVDs, CDs and any other programme(s) not mentioned in this policy are not in accordance with diocesan policy and will not be used to deliver RHE.

Teaching will be whole class, mixed gender learning, with the opportunities for a separate boys and girls forum to facilitate the needs of the individual child if necessary or requested in years 5 & 6.

Children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND) will have support in varying ways depending upon their individual needs and in consultation with their parents/carers.

Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers 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 the school will support parents and carers by providing material to be shared with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more. 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 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. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children with their learning. We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.