

Sex
and
Relationship
Education

in

The
Secondary School

Mission Statement

**BRES serves the Kingdom of God in enabling
the enablers to develop the growth in Faith,
Knowledge and Understanding of God in
schools and parishes.**

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY (including HIV & Aids)

Rationale

This policy has been developed to ensure the inclusion of all students with due regard to SEN, Gifted & Talented, gender, ethnicity, disability, Looked After Children, and those students who are on the register in relation to Child Protection issues. The Diocese values the worth of every individual and the contribution they make to the school community as a whole.

In June 2000 the DfEE produced "Sex and Relationship Education Guidance" a PSHE Curriculum and Standards document which states the necessity for all schools to have an up-to-date Sex and Relationship Education policy and programme in place. The programme's overall aim is to provide all pupils with accurate information which will help to develop skills, understand human sexuality, "...learn reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such a delay, and learn about obtaining appropriate advice on sexual health". (DfEE 0116/2000 p.4)

The Sex and Relationship programme should also contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and preparing all pupils for adult life. Sex and Relationship Education is one of a number of specific themes which make up The National Healthy School Standard (NHSS) which was introduced in October 1999 to support and complement the new P.S.H.E. framework.

In all areas of human experience a good base of knowledge and understanding is deemed necessary for informed opinions and decisions to be made – human sexuality is no exception. It is vital that pupils receive effective sex education to prevent putting themselves at risk and to correct misinformation, which may affect their relationships with others.

Sex education must be both appropriate and responsible and those who deliver it must make themselves aware of the Roman Catholic Church's teaching regarding sexual matters.

PURPOSES

- To provide a broad and balanced sex education programme which offers entitlement for all, and which operates in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.
- Endows pupils with positive pro-active attitudes, patterns of behaviour, lifestyles, values, communication and decision-making skills with respect to sexuality and personal relationships.

To foster self-esteem, self-awareness and a sense of moral responsibility.

- To provide appropriate knowledge and understanding relating to the physical, emotional and social aspects of an individual's development as a male or female. Personal relationships, responsible attitudes and appropriate behaviour, family life – the value and importance of the family as a social institution; its contribution to the development of attachment, love and concern in caring for others.
- Terminology relevant to drugs and HIV education and information on how the HIV virus is transmitted through body fluids and how it is not transmitted.
- The safety of the individual in different environments, e.g. at home, at school, at work and during leisure activities.
- To clarify the Roman Catholic Church's teaching in relation to sexual matters.

GUIDELINES

1. The Science department in our schools deals only with the biological aspects of human sexual behaviour in its timetabled lessons. The themes of parenting, relationships and the ethical and moral considerations of sex education are restricted to timetabled P.S.H.E. in line with the advice of the Dfee 01/06/2000 and Religious Education lessons because of the nature of the school community. The information students are given must stress the teaching and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church at all times.
2. The sex education programme should be spiral in its approach, which will ensure continuity and progression throughout the Key Stages. This ensures that key concepts are revisited several times throughout the programme. This allows for reinforcement as well as the differentiated stages of pupil maturity.
3. Any materials intended for use in P.S.H.E. lessons should be checked with the head of the pastoral curriculum to ensure suitability in light of our school's Catholic nature.
4. The teacher with responsibility for the pastoral curriculum will provide INSET, advice, guidance and support to tutor teams or individuals concerning the delivery of sex education. All programmes will be evaluated and monitored regularly using information feedback from teaching staff and pupils to inform future planning.
5. The School's function is to provide a general education about sexual matters and issues, **not** to offer individual advice, information or counselling on aspects of sexual behaviour and contraception.

Teachers cannot:

- give personal advice or counselling on sexual matters (including contraception) to a pupil (either individually or within a group) if a parent has withdrawn that pupil from sex education.
- give personal contraceptive advice to pupils under 16, for whom sexual intercourse is illegal, without parental consent.

Teachers can:

- provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential sexual advice and treatment, e.g. school nurse, their G.P., or Brook Advisory Centre. This is not the provision of sex education, but merely the imparting of information as to where advice, counselling and treatment can lawfully be obtained.

6. The issue of staff/pupil confidentiality is of importance. Where a pupil is considered at risk from any type of abuse, whether emotional, physical or sexual, or in breach of the law, the teacher must refer this matter immediately to the Headteacher in compliance with the L.E.A. procedures for Child Protection. The Headteacher will decide whether to inform the parents and/or appropriate authorities and may arrange for counselling:-

- Teachers must not promise confidentiality.
- Pupils must be made aware that any incident may be conveyed to the Headteacher and possibly parents.
- Teachers must use their professional judgement to decide whether confidence can be maintained having heard the information.
- Teachers must indicate clearly to pupils when the content of a conversation can no longer be kept confidential – the pupil can then decide whether to proceed or not.

7. Those involved in educating and caring for HIV + children should be sensitive to their need for confidentiality and their right to privacy. Both parents and the child may need support as may the teachers and others involved in the direct care of the child at school. The number of people who are aware that a child is infected is, therefore, confined on a “need to know” basis. Although most HIV + children show no symptoms of infection, if the measures outlined in this policy are put into practice then the “need to know” is largely eliminated.

Staff must ensure that they follow the correct procedures relating to ‘First Aid’ procedures. Pupils if and when possible should be sent to the school office, where a trained first-aider will deal with pupils according to the appropriate safety precautions.

8. All parents will be sent a letter annually informing them that at various stages and in certain subjects, aspects of sex education will be covered in that academic year. The letter will also inform parents of their right to withdraw their child from sex education lessons. Parents do not have to give reasons for withdrawal, but we respectfully invite them to do so, so that they are aware of the nature and content of the full programme, which can often resolve misunderstandings. Once a parent’s request to withdraw is made, that request must be complied with until revoked by the parent.

9. We believe that most of the Sex Education Programme is best discussed openly with teachers who are known and trusted by the pupils. However, visitors such as nurses, family planning or sexual health workers can greatly enhance the quality of the provision as long as they are used in addition to, not instead of a planned programme for sex education. After gaining approval for the visit from the Headteacher, the organiser must make the visitor aware of the Roman Catholic ethos of our Schools to ensure that the degree of explicitness of the contact and presentation are acceptable.

CONCLUSION

This policy reaffirms the central principles of the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on sexuality and other aspects of sex education, whilst empowering students to play a responsible role in their personal relationships within the society of the twenty-first century.

SEX & RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rationale

STAFF GUIDANCE DOCUMENT ON THE CATHOLIC TEACHING ON ASPECTS OF SEX EDUCATION

This policy has been developed to ensure the inclusion of all students with due regard to SEN, Gifted & Talented, gender, ethnicity, disability, Looked After Children, and those students who are on the register in relation to Child Protection issues. Our Schools value the worth of every individual and the contribution they make to the school community as a whole.

In a Catholic School it is the responsibility of all the staff to acquaint themselves with Catholic Teaching on moral issues. In the light of such issues becoming more prominent in many areas of the school curriculum, it was felt that staff would welcome the following guidelines on the Catholic teaching on some aspects of Personal Relationships.

The area of Personal Relationships is a delicate one for both pupil and teacher and staff should feel free to discuss and share approaches to classroom practice, this sharing of approaches will highlight the complex nature of Sex Education. The document 'Evaluating the Distinctive Nature of the Catholic School' supports this:

Proper regard should be given to the process of moral development of young people, so that they are not simply informed of the Church's teaching but also helped to develop an appreciation of the values embraced in that teaching.

This means taking account of the world in which our children and young people are growing up(Pp6 – 7)

**Love one another as I have loved you.
John 13.34**

All the teaching of the Catholic Church on moral questions begins from the understanding that God made everyone. God loves everyone and it is God's will that everyone should 'love' and respect others. Love and selfishness are opposites. Inevitably, there will be repetition in particular parts of the teaching. Schools have a clear policy on Sex Education. This document is a guideline on issues which might require clarification

Sex Outside Marriage

The Catholic Church teaches that sex is a gift from God to enable two people to express their exclusive love for each other and to help continue God's work of creation. Thus sexual intercourse should only take place within the firm commitment of marriage.

Divorce

Based on the Gospel teaching of Jesus 'What God has joined together let no man put asunder' the Church does not recognise the breaking of the contract of a valid marriage. The Church will however, examine a 'marriage' and if any of the ingredients of the marriage are missing – at the time of the marriage ceremony, the Church may declare that 'no marriage took place' and an annulment can be granted.

Contraception

Our relationships with other people are expressed by our words and actions. The most intimate of these actions, sexual intercourse, expresses the most intimate relationship, which is the love between husband and wife.

The act of sexual intercourse is also the action through which the human race is continued. Therefore, any sexual acts where the creation of new life has been deliberately ruled out – including the use of artificial contraceptives – must be regarded as a wrong use of sex. The fullest statement on the subject is found in the Encyclical Letter 'Humane Vitae', issued by Pope Paul VI in 1968.

Abortion

The Church's teaching on abortion is quite clear. God created us all in his image and human life is sacred. The question of when this begins has been the cause of debate. The Church states that life begins at conception.

The strength of this arrangement lies in the fact that there is no other point in personal development of which we can say 'Human life has now come into being – before this point it did not exist'.

N.B.

This principle of the sacredness of human life from the moment of conception is one which the Church would apply to moral debates concerning embryology in general and genetic research in particular.

Masturbation

The Church teaches that masturbation is wrong in that it can be seen as a form of self – indulgence. This is not what the act of sex is intended to be. God, the Creator, designed it as the special means by which man and a woman can give themselves to one another.

Masturbation encourages us to live in a fantasy world rather than to find fulfilment through working hard at a relationship in the real world. It can teach us to regard others as sex objects, rather than people in their own right.

Homosexuality

We need, first to distinguish between homosexuality as a condition and homosexuality as a practice. The Catholic Church accepts that, generally speaking, homosexuality as a condition is not a matter of choice. However, while all human beings are called to love, the Church does not believe that sexual activity is necessary to the expression of this love; witness the value it attaches to celibacy and the vow of virginity. In fact, the church teaches that the full sexual expression of love is reserved for

husband and wife in marriage and that this sexual expression of love must be open to the possibility of new life. Hence, the Catholic Church does not accept homosexuality in practice. It does not believe that sexual acts between persons of the same sex are morally right in principle.

The Church bases this teaching on Biblical theology and on its Philosophy of Natural Law. However, the Church is aware of the special problems of homosexuals and would stress in this regard the love of Jesus for all. We are all created by God and the possibility of repentance and forgiveness for sexual sins is open to all.

Aids

The approach of the Catholic Church towards AIDS can be viewed from the point of view of :-

1. The Victim
2. The underlying causes.
 - 1 (i) Once a person suffers, from whatever cause, the victim is to be treated with the fullness of Christian love and care.
 - (ii) Great care must be taken to avoid the 'homosexual bashing' mentality.
 - 2 (i) Clearly the Catholic Church supports the view that loyalty to one partner is the best defence against the spread of AIDS
 - (ii) Since the Catholic view is that the full sexual expression of human love is reserved for husband and wife within marriage, it cannot support any measures, which tacitly accept, even if they do not encourage, sexual activity outside marriage.... 'Nor can we accept .0that for the unmarried the choices lie between condoms and infection. There is a third course of action: refusal to engage in extra marital sexual activity' – (Cardinal Hume)

Conscience

The Church teaches that Man must obey his conscience is his most direct connection with moral commandments. There is the serious obligation of informing ones conscience for only a properly instructed conscience can be a reliable guide and can claim ultimate freedom of decision. We must learn to make decisions on Christian wisdom and authority, but decisions which are our own and for which we are prepared to take responsibility in the sight of God.