



## The Federation of St Joseph's and St Thomas More Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary Schools



### Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Statement

#### Intent

Relationship and Sex Education is part of the mission of Catholic schools to educate the whole person. It is carried out as part of holistic education which seeks to form, as well as inform, young people in preparation for adult life. RSE is 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 is positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated. All RSE is in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It emphasises 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 also prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.

At the federation of St Joseph's and St Thomas More we aim for RSE to:

- Be faithful to the Church's vision of human wholeness whilst recognising the contemporary context in which we live today;
- Involve parents as they are primary educators of their child;
- Provide a positive view of human sexuality and dignity of the human person;
- Equip young people with the ability to make practical judgments about the right thing to do in particular circumstances;
- Explore and promote virtues which are essential to promoting respect and dignity;
- Be delivered in an age appropriate way which reflects the development of the child;
- Be part of cross-curricular work;
- Be sensitive to the needs of the individual pupil and recognise the individuality of all;
- Be taken seriously by governors and teachers as an integrated part of the broad and balanced curriculum that Catholic schools offer;
- Be delivered by competent professionals who understand the Church's teaching.



*Live fully, act justly*



## Implementation

At the federation of St Joseph's and St Thomas More, we recognise that parents are the primary educators of their children, especially when it comes to sensitive topics such as RSE. Therefore, we collaborate closely with parents to ensure RSE is delivered in an appropriate way.

We believe each child and young person is entitled to experience “a school climate in which the quality of relationships between staff and pupils, between pupils themselves, is marked by honesty, personal identification, warmth, trust and security.”<sup>1</sup> All adult members of the school community are role models of good, healthy relationships and educators in this dimension of pupils' development. However, the teacher is the single most important contributor. The teacher's role, in particular, is to value and affirm all pupils, to actively promote open and honest relationships, to develop gospel-inspired pastoral systems and to provide effective learning in Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

At the federation of St Joseph's and St Thomas More, we use **Life to the Full**, which is a broad programme approved by the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle that goes beyond Relationships and Sex Education enabling us to also meet the government statutory requirements of Relationships and Health Education.

Life to the Full 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 respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body. The following virtues are explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

Life to the Full includes teaching about personal health, physical and emotional wellbeing, strong emotions, private parts of the body, personal relationships, family structures, trusted adults, growing bodies, puberty, menstruation, life cycles, the dangers of social media, where babies come from, an understanding of the Common Good and living in the wider world. The entire teaching is underpinned with a religious understanding that our deepest identity is as a child of God – created chosen and loved by God. The programme is fully inclusive of all pupils and their families.



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## Impact

Life to the Full is taught with a spiral approach to learning, in which pupils revisit the same topics at an age-appropriate stage through their school life, so that their knowledge and understanding grows over time.

By the end of the Life to the Full programme, children will have fully developed the following **attitudes** and **virtues**:

- reverence for the gift of humanity;
- 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;
- responsibility for their own actions and a recognition of the impact of these on others;
- celebrating the gift of love;
- recognising the importance of marriage and family life.

By the end of the Life to the Full programme, children will have fully developed 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 and learning how to develop relationships;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.



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By the end of the Life to the Full programme, children will fully **know** and **understand**:

- the Church's teaching on relationships;
- 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.

<sup>1</sup> *Education in Sexuality. Some Guidelines for Teachers and Governors in Catholic Schools, CES, 1994*



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