

Policy on Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)

The school recognises the importance that SRE can play in contributing to the development of healthy young people and this policy is designed to ensure that our pupils have access to all the teaching and resources that are required to enable them to make prudent judgements about sex and relationships.

Mission Statement

The mission of St Bede's RC High School includes the requirement to guide and inspire each member of the school community so that everyone involved can reach their full potential in the light of the teachings of Christ and the values portrayed in the Gospels.

Aims of School

- To develop in pupil's a knowledge of the Catholic faith and a respect for the spiritual and moral values intrinsic to it.
- To prepare pupils for adult life and for productive roles at work, in the community, at home and at leisure.
- To provide pupils with the knowledge to keep themselves fit and healthy.

Definition of Sex and Relationship Education

SRE is "lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health." (SRE Guidance, DfEE 0116/2000, para. 9 page 5) It is also about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of him/herself as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in a right relationship with oneself, others and the whole of God's creation and being enabled to make moral decisions according to an informed conscience.

Aim and Rationale

For the State, "The objective of SRE is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. A successful programme, firmly embedded in PSHE, will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood." (DfEE document, p.3, para.2)

At the Second Vatican Council the Bishops were more specific and asked that, young people should be trained to acquire gradually a more perfect sense of responsibility in the proper development of their own lives by constant effort and in the pursuit of liberty... As they grow older, they should receive a positive and prudent sex education." (*Gravissimum Educationis*, para.1)

Our approach to SRE will be a "positive" one that acknowledges that sexuality was part of God's creation.

Our approach will also be a "prudent". A prudent SRE is designed to empower our pupils to make good decisions. This can only be done when it is based on accurate knowledge, and set in a framework that acknowledges the fundamental goodness of all of God's creation.

The aim, therefore, of a “positive and prudent” education in sexuality is to make real and to celebrate the beauty of God’s creation and to enable pupils to make good decisions about their sexuality. This education will always be done in the context of the living tradition of Church teaching.

Objectives

The objectives of SRE will be

1. to present clearly a Christian, sexual ethic based on the teaching and wisdom of the Church.
2. to encourage the development of a personal, moral code rooted in Gospel Values and to promote self-confidence and self-esteem.
3. to encourage pupils to make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions according to an informed conscience about the attitudes they will adopt both in school and adult life.
4. to encourage pupil to develop self-respect, dignity, self-restraint and respect for others acknowledging that all persons are created in the image and likeness of God.
5. to help pupils develop an understanding that love is central to the basis of relationships and family life.
6. to encourage pupils to reflect on their own relationships in order to develop an understanding of themselves, their sexuality and that of others so that their attitudes in relation to sexual activity are caring and responsible.
7. to ensure that pupils appreciate the benefits of stable married life and the responsibilities of parenthood.
8. to help pupils recognise the physical, emotional and moral risks of casual and promiscuous sexual behaviour.
9. to present biological facts in an objective and balanced manner and to use appropriate terminology to enable pupils to discuss issues without embarrassment or fear of ridicule.
10. to develop an awareness of an individual's legal responsibilities in relation to sexual behaviour.
11. to ensure other models of family and relationships are recognised and understood.

Roles and Responsibilities

a) Governors

In accordance with Section 404 of the Education Act of 1996 the governing body will keep up to date the school’s policy for SRE, in consultation with parents and will make copies of the policy available to them. We will make known to parents their right under Section 405 of the 1996 Act to withdraw their children from all or part of SRE provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum.

b) Teachers

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

c) Pupils

Pupils should be willing to listen to the teaching of the Church whilst being aware that a variety of other views exist regarding moral issues related to SRE. They will be expected to have a concern for, and accept responsibility for, his/her knowledge and understanding of his/her sexual development.

d) The Wider Community

The school will make appropriate use of external agencies and their personnel. All staff from external agencies will be asked to adhere to the Catholic ethos of the school.

e) Parents

Recognising that parents are the primary educators of their children, the school will seek to support them in this task.

We will ensure that parents are kept informed of SRE within St Bede's, and of our expectations of their children.

Guidelines

The school will follow the guidance offered in Chapter 7 of the DFEE Document (p.30) for dealing with sensitive questions and for offering appropriate confidentiality (with the exception of point 7.11 bullet point 3). We will ensure that all involved in the delivery of SRE are familiar with their legal and professional responsibilities.