



Pope Francis

Catholic Multi Academy Trust



RSHE POLICY

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

In God's light, we love, learn and grow together.

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Statement of intent

This policy forms part of our overall aim of 'nurturing children' (see Mission Statement). The policy is a response to government legislation and statements from the Bishops' conference. Also, it is part of the Church's mission to help our pupils achieve the most complete formation possible, including all areas of personal relationships. Indeed, as the Gospel tells us, (John 10:10), Jesus said, 'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.'

Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is essential for young people to learn about the nature of marriage, family life and relationships, taught in an age-appropriate way.

In our school RSHE is taught in the context of the Catholic Church's teaching and with full consultation and involvement of parents. All Relationship, Sex and Health Education RSHE will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise 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 will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. As part of the RSHE we use 'Journey In Love', 'My Happy Mind' which is an NHS backed PSHE programme, 'No Outsiders', 'NSPCC' to make sure our children receive full coverage of the national curriculum.

At Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust, we understand the importance of educating pupils about sex, relationships and their health, for them to make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives.

The teaching of RSHE can help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It allows us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and in wider society.

We have an obligation to provide pupils with high-quality, evidence and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how St. Mary's RSHE curriculum is organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 □
Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Online Safety Policy

- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Pupil Confidentiality Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Technology Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the RSHE curriculum is well-led, effectively managed and well-planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring that teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Providing clear information to parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.
- Ensuring RSHE is resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures St. Mary's can fulfil its legal obligations.
 - Maintaining and developing the religious ethos of St. Mary's.
- Creating and keeping up-to-date a separate written statement of this policy and ensuring the statement is published on St. Mary's website and provided free of charge to anyone who requests it.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring all staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects.
- Ensuring parents are fully informed of this policy.
- Reviewing all requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory elements of the RSHE curriculum.
- Discussing withdrawal requests with parents, and the pupil if appropriate, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, including the benefits of receiving the education.
- Ensuring withdrawn pupils receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- Encouraging parents to be involved in consultations regarding reviews of St. Mary's RSHE curriculum.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Reporting to the governing board on the effectiveness of this policy and the curriculum.

The RSHE subject leader will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of RSHE.
- Working closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the RSHE curriculum compliments, and does not duplicate, the content covered in other curriculum subjects.
- Ensuring the curriculum is age-appropriate and of high quality.
- Reviewing changes to the RSHE curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of RSHE, providing support to staff where necessary.

- Ensuring the continuity and progression between each year group.
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the curriculum.
- Ensuring St. Mary's meets its statutory requirements in relation to RSHE.
- Leading staff meetings and ensuring all members of staff involved in the curriculum have received the appropriate training.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities in the subject.
- Ensuring the correct standards are met for recording and assessing pupil performance.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the headteacher.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Offering advice and consultation for safeguarding-related subjects in the RSHE curriculum.
- Promoting knowledge and awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff.
- Being an appropriate point of contact for staff who have concerns about the welfare of a pupil that have arisen through the teaching of RSHE.

Subject teachers will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with, and promoting, this policy.
- Delivering RSHE in a manner that is sensitive, of high quality and appropriate for each year group.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of appropriate teaching methods and resources are used to cover the content.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE.
- Liaising with the SENCO to identify and respond to individual needs of pupils with SEND. Liaising with the RSHE subject leader on key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Monitoring pupil progress in RSHE.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of RSE or health education to the RSHE subject leader or a member of the SLT.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the DSL.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents have requested to withdraw them from the non-statutory components of RSE, by providing them with alternative education opportunities.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Advising teaching staff how best to identify and support pupils' individual needs.
- Advising staff on the use of TAs in order to meet pupils' individual needs.

3. Organisation of the RSHE curriculum

For the purpose of this policy:

- **"RSHE"** is used to refer to the overall programme of relationships, sex and health education.

- **“RSE”** refers to relationships and sex education and is defined as teaching pupils about developing healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, and helping them to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- **“Health education”** is defined as teaching pupils about how they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, and how physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.

The RSHE curriculum has been developed, and will be monitored and reviewed, in consultation with teachers, pupils and parents, and in accordance with DfE recommendations.

We will gather the views of teachers, pupils and parents in the following ways:

- Questionnaires
- Meetings
- Letters
- Training sessions

Each class teacher will be responsible for teaching the themes and we will draw on the expertise of outside agencies such as St. Mary's nurse as and when required. Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is taught both discretely and within the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum lessons. Some aspects of the PSHE/ RSHE curriculum may be touched upon in other lessons as it shares links with Religious Education, Science and Physical Education. Our RSHE will ensure that content is relevant to the age, experience and maturity of pupils. A list of quality assured resources can be found in St. Mary's RSHE curriculum overview.

The majority of the RSHE curriculum is delivered through PSHE education, with statutory elements taught via the science curriculum. The RSHE subject leader will work closely with their colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the curriculum complements and does not duplicate the content covered in national curriculum subjects.

St. Mary's will ensure that the curriculum remains in line with the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance at all times.

St. Mary's will consider the context and views of the wider local community when developing the curriculum to ensure it is reflective of circumstances in the local area. The religious background of all pupils will also be considered when planning teaching, to ensure all topics included are appropriately handled.

The RSHE curriculum will be informed by topical issues in St. Mary's and wider community, to ensure it is tailored to pupils' needs, e.g. if there was a local prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections, our curriculum would be tailored to address this issue.

4. RSE subject overview

RSE will develop pupils' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level.

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.

- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships

Pupils should know

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships Pupils

should know

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

Pupils should know

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

5. SE programmes of study

St. Mary's will determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people and includes the statutory content outlined in [section 4](#) of this policy. See 'Journey In Love' Overview on website.

6. Delivery of the curriculum

Through effective organisation and delivery of the RSHE, St. Mary's will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.

- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

RSHE complement several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, St. Mary's will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching.

The RSHE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

The curriculum will proactively address issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on pupil's physical, emotional and sexual development. RSHE will be delivered in a non-judgmental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment.

Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly in the Equality Act 2010, so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.

Although St Mary's does not formally teach about LGBTQ as part of their curriculum, if children express an interest or have questions these will be discussed through stories. All stories will be approved by the Governing board and diocese.

All teaching and resources will be assessed by the RSHE subject leader to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and meet the needs of any SEND, if applicable. Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning. Inappropriate images, videos, etc., will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age and cultural background of pupils. Pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in St. Mary's Online Safety Policy, and Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement.

Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings, and alter their teaching of the programmes accordingly. Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively and honestly.

Teachers will focus heavily on the importance of healthy relationships, including marriage, when teaching RSE, though sensitivity will always be given as to not stigmatise pupils on the basis of their home circumstances. In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that pupils may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.

Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.

At all points of delivery of the curriculum, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how, will be planned in conjunction with parents.

The procedures for assessing pupil progress are outlined in [section 15](#) of this policy.

7. Curriculum links

St. Mary's will seek opportunities to draw links between RSHE and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning. RSHE will be linked to the following subjects:

- **Citizenship** – pupils are provided with the knowledge, skills and understanding to help prepare them to play a full and active part in society, including an understanding of how laws are made and upheld and how to make sensible decisions.

- **Science** – pupils are taught about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows, including puberty.
- **ICT and computing** – pupils are taught about how they can keep themselves safe online and the different risks that they may face online as they get older.
- **PE** – pupils can develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and lead healthy, active lives.
- **PSHE** – pupils learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.

8. Working with parents

St. Mary's understands that parents' role in the development of their children's understanding about relationships, sex and health is vital and will, therefore, engage parents as far as possible in their children's learning. This will include providing parents with frequent opportunities to understand and ask questions about St. Mary's approach to RSHE.

St. Mary's will consult closely with parents when reviewing the content of St. Mary's's RSHE curriculum, and will be given regular opportunities to voice their opinions and concerns. St. Mary's will use the views of parents to inform decisions made about the curriculum content and delivery; however, parents will not be granted a 'veto' on curriculum content, and all final decisions will be St. Mary's to make.

When in consultation with parents, St. Mary's will provide:

- The curriculum content, including what will be taught and when.
- Examples of the resources St. Mary's intends to use to deliver the curriculum.
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSHE.

St. Mary's will remain aware that the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum may be of concern to parents. If parents have concerns regarding RSHE, they will submit these to office@stmarys.pfcmat.org or contact St. Mary's office to arrange a meeting with the headteacher on 01519244447.

9. Working with external agencies

Working with external agencies will be used to enhance our delivery of RSHE and bring in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging pupils. External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the RSHE curriculum but will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

When working with external agencies, St. Mary's will:

- Check the visitor credentials of all external agencies.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the external expert's fits with the planned curriculum and provisions of this policy.
- Discuss with the visitor the details of how they intend to deliver their sessions and ensure the content is age appropriate and accessible for all pupils.
- Request copies of the materials and lesson plans the visitor will use, to ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs.
- Agree with the agency on how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports must be dealt with in line with St. Mary's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

St. Mary's will use visitors to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of teaching staff, not to replace teaching by those staff.

10. Withdrawal from lessons

St. Mary's will always recognise that parents have the right to have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. St. Mary's will uphold that parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from the relationships or health elements of the programmes.

Requests to withdraw a child from sex education will be made **in writing** to the headteacher.

Before granting a withdrawal request, the headteacher will discuss the request with the parents and, as appropriate, the pupil, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The headteacher will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have. All discussions with parents will be documented. These records will be kept securely in St. Mary's office in line with St. Mary's Records Management Policy.

Following discussions with parents, St. Mary's will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16. After this point, if the pupil wishes to receive RSE rather than be withdrawn, St. Mary's will make arrangements to provide the pupil with RSE.

Pupils who are withdrawn from RSE will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the full period of withdrawal.

For requests concerning the withdrawal of a pupil with SEND, the headteacher will take the pupils' specific needs into account when making their decision.

11. Equality and accessibility

St. Mary's will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against pupils because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sexual orientation

St. Mary's will consider the backgrounds, gender, age range and needs of its pupils and determine whether it is necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with the above protected characteristics.

St. Mary's will design the RSHE curriculum to be inclusive of all pupils. St. Mary's will be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to their characteristics, e.g. SEND or being LGBTQ+. Teachers will understand that they may need to liaise with the SENCO and be more explicit and adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to pupils with SEND.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of pupils at different developmental stages, St. Mary's will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and is delivered with reference to the law.

St. Mary's will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between all pupils, and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic.

St. Mary's will be actively aware of everyday issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and managed promptly. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Any reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with St. Mary's Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

12. Safeguarding and confidentiality

All pupils will be taught about keeping themselves safe, including online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

To meet DfE's best practice advice, the DSL will be involved in the formulation of safeguarding-related areas of the curriculum, as the knowledge and resources may help to address safeguarding issues more appropriately and effectively.

When teaching issues that are particularly sensitive for pupils of all ages, e.g. self-harm or suicide, teachers will be made aware of the risks of inadvertently encouraging, or providing instructions to, pupils. Teaching of these subjects will always prioritise preventing harm to pupils as a central goal.

Confidentiality within the classroom will be an important component of RSHE, and teachers will be expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils as far as is possible, in compliance with St. Mary's Pupil Confidentiality Policy.

Teachers will, however, understand that some aspects of RSHE may lead to a pupil raising a safeguarding concern, e.g. disclosing that they are being abused, and that if a disclosure is made, the DSL will be alerted immediately. Pupils will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report, and how their report will be handled – this includes the process for when they have a concern about a peer.

13. Assessment

St. Mary's will have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSHE as for other curriculum areas. Lessons will be planned to provide suitable challenge to pupils of all abilities.

Teaching will be assessed and assessments used to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention. There are no formal examinations for RSHE; however, to assess pupil outcomes, St. Mary's will capture progress in the following ways:

- Tests
- Written assignments
- Self-evaluations

14. Staff training

Training will be provided by the RSHE subject leader to the relevant members of staff on a termly basis to ensure they are up-to-date with the RSHE curriculum. Training will also be scheduled around any updated guidance on the curriculum and any new developments, e.g. "sexting", which may need to be addressed in relation to the curriculum.

St. Mary's will ensure teachers receive training on the Social Exclusion Report on Teenage Pregnancy, and the role of an effective RSE curriculum in reducing the number of teenage conceptions.

Appropriately trained staff will be able to give pupils information on where and how to obtain confidential advice, counselling and treatment, as well as guidance on emergency contraception and their effectiveness.

17. Monitoring and review

The RSHE subject leader will be responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for the subject. They will conduct subject assessments on a **termly** basis, which will include a mixture of the following:

- Self-evaluations
- Lesson observations
- Topic feedback forms
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Lesson planning scrutiny

The RSHE subject leader will create annual subject reports for the headteacher and governing board to report on the quality of the subjects. They will also work regularly and consistently with the headteacher and RSHE link governor, e.g. through monthly review meetings, to evaluate the effectiveness of the subjects and implement any changes.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher in conjunction with the RSHE subject leader on an annual basis.

Any changes needed to the policy, including changes to the programmes, will be implemented by the headteacher. Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff and, where necessary, parents and pupils, involved in the RSHE curriculum.

The next scheduled review date for this policy will be Sep 2026