



Enabling Catholic primary schools to fulfil
the new statutory Relationships Education curriculum

This Document

From September 2020, 'Relationships Education' will become a statutory subject for all primary schools and 'Relationships and Sex Education' will become a statutory subject for all secondary schools in England.

A draft statutory guidance for governing bodies, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers was published in February 2019 by the Department for Education. For Catholic schools, this new curriculum provides challenges and opportunities.

Ten Ten is an independent Catholic educational organisation that has been working at the forefront of delivering RSE in Catholic primary and secondary schools since 2007. For the past 2 years, we have been working in partnership with dioceses and schools throughout the UK to develop an integrated programme in Relationship Education for Catholic primary schools and Relationship and Sex Education for Catholic secondary schools called "Life to the Full". Our mission is to enable Catholic schools to deliver an RSE programme that truly enables their students to live "life to the full" (John 10:10).

In this document, we aim to give you:

- A summary of some the key features of the new statutory curriculum;
- A summary of the Church's guidance for schools on delivering RSE;
- 10 Principles for a Catholic RSE Programme;
- An overview of Ten Ten's programme, "Life to the Full", and how it can enable your school to deliver an RSE programme that is fit-for-purpose;
- A summary of Ten Ten's fee structure for the academic year 2019-20.

We also provide, in the Appendix, the following documents:

- The Department of Education's draft statutory guidance
- A Model Catholic Secondary RSE Curriculum (the Catholic Education Service)
- "Learning to Love", a teaching document for Catholic educators from the Bishops' Conference in England and Wales.

Links

To quickly access each section, click on the hyperlinks below.

- A summary of some the [key features of the new statutory curriculum](#);
- A summary of the [Church's guidance for schools](#) on delivering RSE;
- [10 Principles](#) for a Catholic RSE Programme;
- An overview of [Ten Ten's programme, "Life to the Full"](#) and how it can enable your school to deliver an RSE programme that is fit-for-purpose;
- A summary of [Ten Ten's fee structure](#) for the academic year 2019-20.
- [Appendix 1](#): The Department of Education's draft statutory guidance
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Key Information from the DRAFT GUIDANCE

The last time the **Department of Education** published guidance for schools on teaching SRE (as it was known then) was in 2000. This, of course, was a time before the internet had infiltrated our lives, social media was a thing and conversations around gender, sexuality and family structures did not have the breadth and complexity we are faced with today. These days, of course, young people are just as likely to be engaging in social interaction through online devices as much as they are face-to-face.

The purpose and vision behind teaching young people how to live well with themselves and with others has evolved, reflected in the fact that the new guidance now refers to the curriculum as RSE, rather than SRE, placing the emphasis on the need for young people to understand 'sex' within the context of 'relationships'.

In the overview for primary schools, it says:

"The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils should be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary." (54 & 55)

Those who have worked in Catholic education for many years will know that so many Catholic schools already fulfil these expectations very effectively, and do so much more, placing the formation of the individual with his/her personal circumstances and experiences at the heart of the school's pastoral care.

However, compulsory Relationships Education is more than just a mission of pastoral care to be led by the school's pastoral team. It is a curriculum subject - a statutory element of PSHE.

A statutory subject

From September 2020, 'Relationships Education' will become statutory in all primary/prep schools and 'Health Education' will become statutory in all state-funded schools. These subjects will sit alongside other primary core curriculum subjects:

English	Maths
Science	Design and Technology
History	Geography
Art and Design	Music
Physical Education (PE)	Computing
Foreign languages	
Relationships and Sex Education	Health Education

When and how should it be taught?

The draft guidance says:

Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in [the statutory] guidance, in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within **a planned programme of lessons**. (5)

High-quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. (2)

Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge (51). [However], use of visitors should be to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of teaching staff, rather than as a replacement for teaching by those staff. (53)

This means that RSE can no longer be taught only on drop-down days or left entirely to the input of an external visitor. Instead, it should be integrated into the core school curriculum timetable; evidence of success needs to be recorded; and it should be led by staff in school who can, of course, receive support from outside agencies and organisations. But the teaching cannot be left to these outside agencies only.

What about faith schools?

In press and news stories about the new RSE guidance, there has been concern and anxiety about how far faith schools can deliver RSE within the context of their own faith perspective. This conflict has been particularly evident in the row that erupted in Birmingham schools regarding the No Outsiders programme and the Muslim community.

The new draft statutory RSE guidance says this:

Schools with a religious character may teach the distinctive faith perspective on relationships, and balanced debate may take place about issues that are seen as contentious. For example, the school may wish to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex. (21)

It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens. (76) Schools may choose to explore faith, or other perspectives, on some of these issues in other subjects such as Religious Education. (77)

What about LGBT?

In the draft statutory guidance, there is a section particularly focused on the teaching of LGBT matters. It says:

In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics. (36)

Schools should ensure that all of their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum. (37)

This guidance covers both primary and secondary schools. There is no specific direction about when LGBT content should be taught and the guidance does not say that it should be introduced to primary school children. This decision is ultimately at the discretion of the school governors.

What about parents?

The draft guidance says:

Schools should ensure that, when they consult with parents, they provide examples of the resources that they plan to use as this can be reassuring for parents and enables them to continue the conversations started in class at home. (24)

* * *

In the next section on Catholic RSE, we will examine the expectations of Church about the delivery of RSE within a Catholic context and then, building on this statutory guidance, we will draw some conclusions about the principles at the heart of a Catholic RSE programme.

The full draft guidance from the Department of Education can be found in **Appendix One** of this document.

Catholic RSE

(Note: in discussing 'Catholic RSE' we are referring to 'Relationships Education' (primary), 'Relationships and Sex Education' (secondary) and 'Health Education' within a Catholic context)

In recent years, the Church has produced three documents which all pertain to the education of young people in Relationship and Sex Education:

- **Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love)** is Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation about love in the family. Chapter 7, in particular, is titled 'Towards a Better Education of Children';
- **Learning to Love** is a teaching document from the Bishops of England and Wales which provides "An introduction to Catholic Relationship and Sex Education for Catholic educators";
- **A Model Catholic RSE Curriculum** is a guidance document produced by the Catholic Education Service for schools to help them produce their own programme of study that is fit for purpose. It is highlighted in the DFE draft statutory guidance as a work of good practice.

In addition, many dioceses have also produced curriculum guidance documents for their own schools.

In developing our understanding of what makes an effective Catholic RSE programme, we have drawn from these documents as well as Saint John Paul II's foundational, ground-breaking teaching on the meaning and purpose of the 'body', known as 'The Theology of the Body'.

In the introduction to Learning to Love, the Bishops said:

We expect all Catholic schools to ensure that space is made in the curriculum for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). The content of what is taught must express the teaching of the Church, and should be delivered to suit the age of the children or young people to whom it is addressed. We all need to recognise that without providing an education in this area, we leave many young people vulnerable to receiving their education second-hand, and often from sources which damage them and their capacity to love.

Learning to Love, Introduction

And in the introduction to the model Catholic RSE curriculum, the CES said:

...any teaching about love and sexual relationships in a Catholic school must be rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching about what it is to be truly human

in Christ, what it means to live well in relationship with others and be presented within a positive framework.”

A Model Catholic RSE Curriculum (CES)

A Model Curriculum

In their Model Curriculum, the CES provide a proposed structure for delivering a Catholic RSE programme, which can be mapped across primary and secondary education within a spiral learning curriculum that meets children and young people where they are at. It has three broad areas of focus:

Created and Loved by God (this explores the individual). The Christian imperative to love self, made in the image and likeness of God, shows an understanding of the importance of valuing and understanding oneself as the basis for personal relationships.

Created to Love Others (this explores an individual's relationships with others) God is love. We are created out of love and for love. The command to love is the basis of all Christian morality.

Created to Live in Community – local, national & global (this explores the individual's relationships with the wider world) Human beings are relational by nature and live in the wider community. Through our exchange with others, our mutual service and through dialogue, we attempt to proclaim and extend the Kingdom of God for the good of individuals and the good of society.

Other dioceses have produced different, though similar, templates for how to explore RSE within a Catholic framework.

The full Model Catholic RSE Curriculum from the Catholic Education Service can be found in **Appendix Two** of this document.

* * *

Through our extensive work delivering RSE within a Catholic context in schools in England and Wales over the past 12 years, drawing on the draft statutory guidance and the various Church documents, we have created **10 Principles for a Catholic RSE Programme**.

Ten Ten's 10 PRINCIPLES for a Catholic RSE Programme

#1 Our bodies are good!

Saint John Paul II said:

“The body - in fact, only the body - is capable of making visible what is invisible, the spiritual and the divine.”

We need our physical bodies in order to relate to others, to love others. In this quote, John Paul II highlights the dignity inherent in our physical bodies and the respect that they deserve; they make visible the invisible – the spiritual dimension of the human person.

Let's put this another way. A human person does not have a body. The body expresses the person. We exist in a culture which attempts to depersonalise the body or reject the gift of the body in its entirety as part of the person. A Catholic RSE programme should resist this vision of the human person.

This understanding of the body filters down into all areas of teaching within RSE: our physical health and hygiene, bodily autonomy, consent, puberty and physical changes, gender identity, menstruation and sexual intimacy. We are our bodies and our bodies are good!

#2 As we grow in our loving relationships with others, we become close to the image and likeness of God.

We are 'made in the image and likeness of God'. But what does this mean?

God is not one person. God is three persons – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. God is a relationship of love.

If God is a relationship of love, then we are most in His image and likeness when we are in loving relationships. Where do we find that? Well, for many we become closer to the image and likeness of God through our families, through our close friendships,

through our intimate relationships and when we reach out to others, even people we don't know, with love.

Therefore, a Catholic RSE programme should enable children and young people to understand the deep truth that their loving relationships (with family members, friends, colleagues, boyfriends and girlfriends, spouses and neighbours, both local and global) offer them a path of spiritual growth and bring them closer to being in the image and likeness of God.

#3 Catholic RSE should be about the whole person

According to the draft DfE guidance, an RSE programme that is fit-for-purpose must cover a wide-range of topics relevant to the lives and experiences of young people. It is easy to quickly scan through the statutory guidance and see 'hot topics' such as 'grooming', 'sexual exploitation', 'online abuse', 'sexual health' and 'gender identity' jumping out from the page. However, a Catholic RSE programme should not simply deliver these lessons in isolation; instead they should be addressed within a wider, holistic view of the human person, one whose deepest identity and dignity is rooted in God (see principle #5).

#4 Catholic RSE should be taught in partnership with parents

One of the most distinctive features of a Catholic RSE programme should be emphasising the vital role that parents have in nurturing their children. In the document, "Who is responsible for teaching RSE?", the Catholic Education Service said this:

"Parents are the first educators of their children. It is their right and responsibility to inform and educate their children in matters relating to human growth and development, particularly sexual development. Therefore, schools should always seek to work in partnership with parents and carers and the teaching offered by schools should complement and not replace their primary role. The Church has a special duty and right to educate as part of its mission, and a Catholic school is the principal means by which it assists parents in their duties."

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from 'some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE' (DfE Guidance 46). However, within a Catholic RSE programme, it is imperative that schools work in partnership with parents, providing information and guidance, and a collaborative approach to the teaching of the subject.

#5 Our deepest identity is as a child of God - created chosen and loved by God

Children and young people have a deep need for identity and belonging. In its most negative form, this can lead to a tribalistic culture, such as gang membership. It can also lead young people to finding security by labelling themselves, or being labelled by others, in terms of sexual orientation, gender, race, etc.

However, our identity as a child of God is deeper than our own self-understanding, our modes of attraction, or the way our actions or behaviour can put us in a box. It's not that we should suppress or dismiss how anybody expresses or articulates their identity - it's that we help children and young people to develop a deeper and more meaningful understanding that they are called to holiness. Everyone, without exception, is called the same high calling. We may have different challenges and different obstacles to overcome, but everyone is called personally by name.

#6 Story can change hearts and minds

One thing that makes a Catholic RSE programme so unique and different from any other statutory subject is that it shouldn't just equip a child or young person with facts; it doesn't just present neutral or value-free information. It needs to do much more. It needs to speak to hearts and minds in order to elevate the social, moral, cultural and spiritual education of the student.

For Ten Ten, the vehicle we use to speak into hearts and minds is **story**.

As human beings, we often learn from mistakes. However, we don't need to live through difficult experiences in order to grow. We can live those experiences out vicariously through the art of story; by engaging with story, we can reflect on our life choices and how we might alter or change something for the better.

Through story, children and young people can journey from watching a story – to understanding it – to relating their personal lives to what they've watched – and then making a commitment or action to change. This is the methodology that Ten Ten adopts in all of our resources.

#7 Catholic RSE is an education in virtue

In their draft guidance, the DfE refer to the development of ‘character’. They talk about the development of resilience, perseverance, honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. Within a Catholic context, we have a different name for it, a word which has a richer context: **virtue**.

This is how the CES describe virtue:

Virtues are habits which are learned from experience, and are gained through imitation, the same virtues being modelled by those who teach. They express the qualities of character that schools should seek to develop in their pupils.

So Catholic RSE is an education in virtuous habits, modelled by the teaching staff, and lived out at school and home. It’s another way in which this statutory subject is different from, say, History or Science. Often those subjects are about knowledge to be applied in future work or studies. With RSE, you apply it now. It’s not only about the future. It’s about the here and now.

#8 Catholic RSE is an education in conscience

Part of the challenge and joy of developing one’s Christian faith is about discerning God’s will. On the one hand, that’s about vocation and our calling in life, but we’re also called to discern God’s will in the day-to-day decisions of life. Consciences need to be formed.

A Catholic RSE programme should help a child or young person to discriminate between God’s will and their own will. It takes a lifetime (and more) to grow and flourish into the fullness of our potential and we need God’s help. Therefore, Catholic RSE should equip children and young people with guidance so that they can gradually discern the difference between what hinders – and what helps - their integral growth towards God; towards a deeper wholeness in Him.

#9 Relationship Education is about striving for the Common Good

It can be very easy to think of RSE as merely a programme in helping children and young people to understand 'sex' within the context of 'relationships' at an age-appropriate level throughout their education, but an education in relationships is much, much more than that. Nurturing these virtues and character naturally spill over into a desire to serve and love others, including the stranger. Relationship Education is about striving for the Common Good.

The Catholic charity Together For the Common Good asks some challenging questions:

- Are we creating conditions in which every individual in the community can flourish?
- Do we recognise the gift of the other, respecting different backgrounds and diversity of opinion?
- Do we treat everyone equally?
- Do we cherish difference and allow everyone to contribute?
- Are we caring well for our world, locally and globally, making the most of our finite resources?
- Do our decisions put the interests of the vulnerable, poor and excluded first?

#10 Prayer, Scripture and the Sacraments fuel the teaching

Finally, we believe that it would be impossible to teach a Catholic RSE programme without the fuel that makes the motor run: prayer. A Catholic RSE programme has to have prayer, the Sacraments and the Word of God at its foundation – creating opportunities for students, teachers and parents to develop their prayer life and grow in a deeper relationship with the person of Jesus.

Ten Ten's Life to the Full

Drawing together information and evidence from the Department of Education and Catholic sources, and based on these 10 principles for a Catholic RSE programme that is fit for purpose, Ten Ten is delighted to announce the creation of a brand new programme of study in Catholic schools called, **Life to the Full**.

Life to the Full

Ten Ten's new programme, **Life to the Full**, will teach Relationships Education (primary) and Relationships and Sex Education (secondary), incorporating Health Education, within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church.

Given that RSE will become a statutory subject for all schools from September 2020, we are embracing “the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life” by giving pupils knowledge “that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships” (DFE Statutory Guidance).

We will deliver this teaching through the prism of Catholic RSE. The framework of our programme is taken from the Model Catholic RSE Programme by the Catholic Education Service, which has been highlighted by the Department of Education as a work of good practice.

Life to the Full is a fully resourced Scheme of Work in Relationships Education for Catholic primary schools which embraces and fulfils the new statutory curriculum. Taught with a spiral approach to learning, in which pupils will revisit the same topics at an age-appropriate stage through their school life, the programme 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, periods, life cycles, the dangers of social media, pornography, 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.

The programme is being written on the assumption that not all class teachers will be Catholic. Our guidance and training for staff will be mindful and supportive of this.

What is it?

Life to the Full is annual subscription platform in Catholic RSE which gives you:

1. A programme of study containing approximately 60 media-rich lessons divided into three learning stages*:
 - Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2);
 - Lower Key Stage Two (Years 3 and 4);
 - Upper Key Stage Two (Years 5 and 6).
2. An accompanying programme of age-specific prayer and worship to support the programme from the creators of “Collective Worship”.
3. Assessment Activities to record evidence of success;
4. Training sessions for staff;
5. An online parent portal for links to home.

*EYFS to follow in the future.

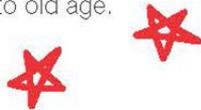
Module One: Created and Loved by God

Module One: Created and Loved by God explores the individual. Rooted in the teaching that we are made in the image and likeness of God, it helps children to develop an understanding of the importance of valuing themselves as the basis for personal relationships.



Key Stage One:

- We are uniquely made by a loving God;
- We have differences and similarities;
- Key information about staying physically healthy;
- Understanding feelings and emotions, including strong feelings such as anger;
- The cycle of life from birth to old age.



Lower Key Stage Two:

- Understanding differences;
- Respecting our bodies;
- Puberty and changing bodies
- Strategies to support emotional wellbeing including practicing thankfulness;
- The development of pupils' understanding of life before birth.



Upper Key Stage Two:

- Appreciation of physical and emotional differences;
- A more complex understanding of physical changes in girl and boys bodies;
- Body image;
- Strong emotional feelings;
- The impact of the internet and social media on emotional well-being;
- A more nuanced and scientific understanding of life in the womb and how babies are made;
- Menstruation.



Religious UNDERSTANDING



Kester's Adventures follows the story of Kester who is in search of his Maker. When he finds his maker, Abraham, Kester develops a deep and personal relationship with him over many years. As the children grow through the learning stages, Kester's story grows in complexity as he tries to understand his place in the world when faced with more challenging life decisions. Ultimately, he is always reminded that he was created by Abraham, along with his parents, and was loved and cared for even before he was born.

Kester's Adventures is an original story by Ten Ten which is **an allegory for our relationship with God**; it communicates the key idea that we were created out of love and for love.

Module Two: Created to Love Others

Module Two: Created to Love Others explores the individual. Rooted in the teaching that we are made in the image and likeness of God, it helps children to develop an understanding of the importance of valuing themselves as the basis for personal relationships.



Key Stage One:
Unit 'Personal Relationships':



- Special People in their lives who they love and can trust;
- Coping with various social situations and dilemmas;
- The importance and saying sorry and forgiveness within relationships.

Unit 'Keeping Safe':

- The risks of being online;
- The difference between good and bad secrets;
- Teaching on physical boundaries.



Lower Key Stage Two:
Unit 'Personal Relationships':

- Children to develop a more complex appreciation of different family structures;
- Activities and strategies to help them develop healthy relationships with family and friends;
- Techniques for managing thoughts, feelings and actions.

Unit 'Keeping Safe':

- Online safety (incorporating NSPCC resources);
- Teaching on bullying and abuse through a series of animated stories.



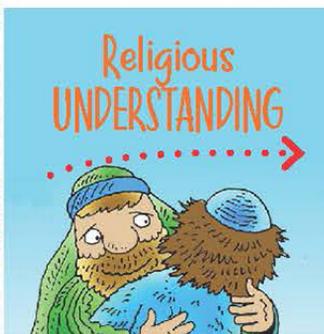
Upper Key Stage Two:
Unit 'Personal Relationships':

- Equip children with strategies for more complex experiences of relationships and conflict;
- Identify and understand how to respond to spoken and unspoken pressure;
- The concept of consent;
- Further teaching on how our thoughts and feelings have an impact on how we act.



Unit 'Keeping Safe':

- Risks of sharing and chatting online;
- A more complex understanding of different forms of abuse.



At the start of each learning stage, we begin with a series of story sessions based on a key Gospel story which provides the religious foundation for the teaching that will follow. For example, through an imaginative retelling of the Prodigal Son, children deepen their understanding of the concept of sin and the importance of forgiveness in relationships.

Module Three: Created to Live in Community

Module Three: Created to Live in Community explores the individual's relationship with the wider world. Here we explore how human beings are relational by nature and are called to love others in the wider community through service, through dialogue and through working for the Common Good.



Key Stage One:

- Children understand that God is love: Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- That being made in His image means being called to be loved and to love others;
- Learn about the various communities they belong to: home, school, parish, the wider community, the nation and the global community;
- Children will know that God calls us to live in community with one another.



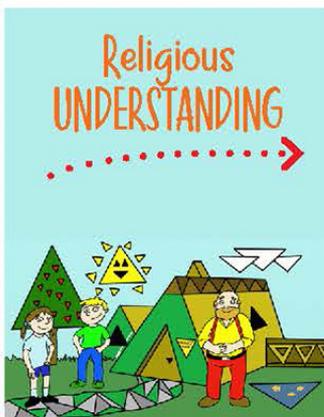
Lower Key Stage Two:

- Develop a deeper understanding that God is love as shown by the Trinity;
- Understand that the human family reflects the Holy Trinity in mutual charity and generosity;
- The Church family comprises of home, school and parish;
- Catholic Social Teaching on what it means to work for the Common Good.



Upper Key Stage Two:

- Children will:
- Know that God is Trinity – a communion of persons;
- Know that the Church is the body of Christ;
- Develop a deeper and richer understanding of Catholic social teaching;
- Learn how certain charities reach out to the wider community with love.



Trinity House is a story told throughout the programme from Years 1 to 6 at a growing level of complexity through each learning stage. It tells the story of the Trinity family who live in Trinity House – Abba, Adam and Amara – symbols of the creative circle of love between Father, Son and Spirit. Children will learn that just like the Trinity of God, we are made to love God and love others, and we are made to be loved by God and others. This extends not only to us, our families, our friends and our personal relationships, but also to the wider world.

The PARADISE STREET sessions

Paradise Street is an original drama series for Upper Key Stage Two which follows the story of 4 friends – Finn, Leyla, Marcus and Siobhan – who have different personal and social experiences related to growing up and puberty. Each episode lasts about 10 minutes and is followed by a time of teacher-led discussion with the pupils. Each session also includes an episode of “**Delving Deeper into Paradise Street**” in which two fun presenters explore the issues in the drama and provide some teaching for pupils (which also acts as guidance and support for teachers). Each concludes with a time of personal writing in a **Module 1 Workbook** which will help the pupils to digest and personalise the teaching.



Costs

<p>7-Day Trial FREE</p>	<p>Annual Subscription £190 +VAT</p>	<p>Annual Subscription £390 +VAT</p>
<p>7-day trial to the full programme</p>	<p>When purchased alongside a full-priced annual subscription to Collective Worship</p>	<p>When purchased on its own as a single programme</p>
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access to the entire programme for 7 days • 3 teachers given personal access • Only 1 trial per school allowed • Available from September 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access to programme resources between September 2019 and July 2020 • All teachers in school given personal access • All parents given access to the Online Parent Portal • Combined total £680+VAT • Discounts available to Collective Worship programme for schools with fewer than 180 pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access to programme resources between September 2019 and July 2020 • All teachers in school given personal access • All parents given access to the Online Parent Portal

Next page: **The true cost of implementing a new curriculum**

The true cost of implementing a new curriculum

Relationships Education is a new statutory curriculum subject that will sit alongside other core curriculum subjects in the school timetable. It will be inspected by Ofsted and will become a significant focus over the coming years as new programmes and resources are created to fulfil the curriculum.

When considering options to implement the new curriculum, schools must consider what it is truly going to cost. It is a fact that every school will be faced with costs, though many will be hidden.

<p>OPTION 1</p> <p>Develop your current PSHE programme</p>	<p>OPTION 2</p> <p>Make use of free resources available</p>	<p>OPTION 3</p> <p>Work in collaboration with Ten Ten</p>
<p>Many Catholic schools already deliver lessons in puberty education for children, using a mixture of printed resources that have been produced over the years. A school may develop this into a Scheme of Work to fulfil the new statutory curriculum.</p>	<p>Over the coming year, free resources will be made available to schools by charities and the DFE. A school could choose to pull these free resources into their own Scheme of Work.</p>	<p>Life to the Full offers a cost-effective solution to a complex problem. Consider this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By working with us, you are working with real people. Although we are not physically in your school or office, we are at the end of the phone or email ready to support you on these matters. • We are known for producing high-quality resources which stand shoulder-to-shoulder with mainstream national organisations. • By working with many, many schools we are spreading the true cost to make the implementation of the new curriculum affordable and cost-effective. • An annual subscription costs less than £1 per head in many cases. • We work in collaboration with many Catholic dioceses and have over 12 years' experience delivering Catholic RSE.
<p>With both options, consider these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the true cost of a school creating their own scheme of work, writing lesson plans, sourcing resources, organising the materials for easy access, providing teacher training, giving parents access to the materials and delivering lessons? See the evidence on the next page for an indication of the true costs. • If something is free, someone else is paying for it. What is the underlying agenda of the producing organisation? Does it support the values of the Catholic school? Does it meet diocesan guidelines? If it is Catholic, are you confident that it meets the DFE guidance? • What happens if your lead teacher moves to another school? Does the knowledge leave with the person? • The RSE Curriculum will be reviewed every 3 years. Will you have to undergo this process again and again? What are the cost implications of that? 		

Curriculum Design – the costs

An online blog about curriculum design states the following:

“Make no mistake, developing a quality curriculum and resourcing it costs money... If releasing staff is what you choose to do then this will naturally come with a significant price tag, either for supply or internal cover. In my experience, a minimum of 10 days non-contact time should be expected to undertake the initial audit and to complete subject and concept mapping exercises. If we look at an average of 10 days of supply per school, then this stage of curriculum development alone can cost upwards of £3,000. This does not, however, include the actual research and writing of curriculum content or creating resources.”

Cornerstones Curriculum

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APPENDIX ONE

DfE Draft Guidance for RSE and Health Education



Department
for Education

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

**Draft statutory guidance for governing bodies,
proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior
leadership teams, teachers**

February 2019

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Secretary of State Foreword

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. The key decisions on these subjects have been informed by a thorough engagement process, including a public call for evidence that received over 23,000 responses from parents, young people, schools and experts and a public consultation where over 40,000 people contacted the Department for Education.

The depth and breadth of views is clear, and there are understandable and legitimate areas of contention. Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and have told us that they see building on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. We agree with this principle and congratulate the many schools delivering outstanding provision to support the personal development and pastoral needs of their pupils. We are determined that the subjects must be deliverable and give schools flexibility to shape their curriculum according to the needs of their pupils and communities.

In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

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All of this content should support the wider work of schools in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils' ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives.

This should be complemented by development of personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty. We have endeavoured to ensure the content is proportionate and deliverable. Whilst we are not mandating content on financial education or careers, we want to support the high quality teaching of these areas in all schools as part of a comprehensive programme, which complements the national curriculum where appropriate and meets the ambitions of the Careers Strategy. We know that many schools will choose to teach the compulsory content within a wider programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education or similar. Schools are encouraged to continue to do so, if this is right for them, and build on established, high quality programmes.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.

Summary

What is the status of this guidance?

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 – further details are in Annex A.

Schools¹ must have regard to the guidance, and where they depart from those parts of the guidance which state that they should (or should not) do something they will need to have good reasons for doing so.

About this guidance

This document contains information on what schools **should** do and sets out the legal duties with which schools **must** comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

Unless otherwise specified, ‘school’ means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent schools, including academies and free schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units.

Who this guidance is for

This statutory guidance applies to all schools², and is therefore aimed at:

- governing bodies of maintained schools (including schools with a sixth form) and non-maintained special schools;
- trustees or directors of academies and free schools;
- proprietors of independent schools (including academies and free schools);
- management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs);
- teachers, other school staff and school nurses;
- head teachers, principals and senior leadership teams;
- Diocese and other faith representatives; and
- for reference for relevant local authority staff.

^{1, 2} Guidance on Health Education does not apply to independent schools, which must meet the Independent School Standards as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. However, they may find the sections on Health Education helpful. It does, however, apply to academies and free schools.

What this guidance updates

This guidance replaces the Sex and Relationship Education guidance (2000). This guidance will be reviewed three years from first required teaching (September 2020) and every three years after that point.

The guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (statutory guidance)
- [Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool](#) (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- [Behaviour and Discipline in Schools](#) (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
- [Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) (statutory guidance)
- [Alternative Provision](#) (statutory guidance)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) (advice for schools)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#) (advice for schools, including advice on [cyberbullying](#))
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools](#) (advice for schools)
- [The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance](#) (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- [Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools](#) (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC))
- [SMSC requirements for independent schools](#) (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).
- [National Citizen Service](#) guidance for schools

Introduction

1. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

2. High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society. The duties on schools in this area are set out in legislation.³

3. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.⁴ They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

4. This guidance also sets out both the rights of parents/carers⁵ to withdraw pupils from sex education (but not Relationships or Health Education) and the process that head teachers should follow in considering a request from a parent. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

5. Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in this guidance, in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme or lessons. Teaching will include sufficient well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real life situations.

³ Maintained schools and academies are required to provide a curriculum, which is broad and balanced in accordance with Section 78 of the Education Act 2002. Part I of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 requires independent schools other than academies to make provision for PSHE (paragraph 2(2)(d)), and to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraph 2(2)(i)). Part 2 of the Schedule requires independent schools (including academies) to meet the standard relating to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils.

⁴ For ease of reference, this guidance refers to primary schools and secondary schools, but the statutory requirements refer to pupils receiving primary/secondary education.

⁵ Parents used henceforth to mean both parents and carers.

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6. Many schools are choosing to deliver relationships or sex education as part of a timetabled PSHE programme, with good outcomes. Where that provision meets the requirements of this high level framework of core content they are free to continue with this model. Other schools may choose different curricular models for delivery.
7. The lead teacher will need to work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education programmes complement, and do not duplicate, content covered in national curriculum⁶ subjects such as citizenship, science, computing and PE. It is important to check prior knowledge and build this into the planning process to ensure a smooth transition between primary and secondary. Further information on links to national curriculum subjects can be found on page 39.
8. Schools should be aware that for many young people the distinction between the online world and other aspects of life is less marked than for some adults. Young people often operate very freely in the online world and by secondary school age some are likely to be spending a substantial amount of time online. Where topics and issues outlined in this guidance are likely to be encountered by pupils online, schools should take this into account when planning how to support them in distinguishing between different types of online content and making well-founded decisions.
9. More broadly, the internet and social media have other important characteristics which young people should be aware of in order to help them use them discriminatingly. For example, social media users are sometimes prepared to say things in more extreme, unkind or exaggerated ways than they might in face to face situations, and some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online. Some platforms attract large numbers of users with similar, sometimes extreme, views, who do not welcome dissent or debate. Young people should be aware that certain websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (i.e. to enable targeted advertising). In addition, criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. Schools should take these factors into account when planning teaching of these subjects and consider the overlap with their wider curriculum to ensure pupils know how to keep themselves and their personal information safe.
10. In this guidance where topics occur equally on and offline they are accommodated in the core content under the most applicable theme with the assumption that teachers will deliver them in a way that reflects that pupils will be negotiating issues and opportunities in these areas in all contexts, including online. Where there are topics with exclusively online content or implications this is drawn out explicitly.

⁶ The national curriculum does not apply to academies or independent schools.

Summary of requirements

11. The subjects are part of the basic school curriculum (as previously for sex education in maintained secondary schools), which allows schools flexibility in developing their planned programme, integrated within a broad and balanced curriculum.

12. The guidance applies to:

Relationships Education	Relationships and Sex Education	Health Education
All schools providing primary education, including all-through schools and middle schools (includes schools as set out in the Summary section).	All schools providing secondary education, including all-through schools and middle schools (includes schools as set out in the Summary section).	All maintained schools including schools with a sixth form, academies, free schools, non-maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units.
		The statutory requirement to provide Health Education does not apply to independent schools – PSHE is already compulsory as independent schools must meet the Independent School Standards as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Independent schools, however, may find the principles in the guidance on Health Education helpful in planning an age-appropriate curriculum.
The statutory requirements do not apply to sixth form colleges, 16-19 academies or Further Education (FE) colleges ⁷ , although we would encourage them to support students by offering these subjects. These settings may find the principles helpful, especially in supporting pupils in the transition to FE.		

⁷ Sixth form colleges and other 16-19 institutions that provide education for 14-16-year olds under an agreement with the Department for Education or its agencies are required by that agreement to follow guidance which covers a number of areas including the curriculum. The current guidance sets out the need to include the teaching of sex and relationship education in accordance with sections 403 and 405 of the Education Act. From September 2020, these institutions will need to teach the new subjects of Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education and to follow this guidance.

Developing a policy

13. All schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships Education and RSE. Schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy. Schools should ensure that the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community they serve.

14. There are many excellent examples in which schools have established clear sex education policies in consultation with parents, governors and the wider community, and where they are already delivering effective programmes. Schools should build on that good work in adapting to these new requirements.

What is required?

15. All schools must have an up-to-date policy, which is made available to parents and others. Schools must provide a copy of the policy free of charge to anyone who asks for one and should publish the policy on the school website⁸.

16. The policy should:

<i>Policies for mandatory subjects</i>		<i>Policy for non-mandatory subjects</i>
For primary education⁹	For secondary education	For primary schools that may choose to teach sex education
Define Relationships Education	Define Relationships and Sex Education	Define any sex education they choose to teach other than that covered in the science curriculum.
Set out the subject content, how it is taught and who is responsible for teaching it.		
Describe how the subject is monitored and evaluated.		
Include information to clarify why parents <i>do not</i> have a right to withdraw their child.	Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused from sex education within RSE only.	Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused.

⁸ If a school does not have a website, they should ensure that the policy is available by other means.

⁹ The regulations apply to the teaching of all primary and secondary pupils respectively. This includes all types of schools to which the regulations apply.

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Confirm the date by which the policy will be reviewed.

Typical policies are likely to include sections covering:

- details of content/scheme of work and when each topic is taught, taking account of the age of pupils
- who delivers either Relationships Education or RSE
- how the policy has been produced, and how it will be kept under review, in both cases working with parents
- how delivery of the content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- explanation of the right to withdraw
- requirements on schools in law e.g. the Equality Act (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice)
- how often the policy is updated
- who approves the policy

17. In secondary schools, RSE will often address aspects of relationships and sex education in an integrated way within a single topic. Schools should develop programmes of teaching which prioritise effective delivery of the content, and do not need artificially to separate sex education and Relationships Education.

18. The policy should also reflect the views of teachers and pupils. Listening and responding to the views of young people will strengthen the policy, ensuring that it meets the needs of all pupils.

Religion and belief, including teaching in schools with a religious character

19. A good understanding of pupils' faith backgrounds and positive relationships between the school and local faith communities help to create a constructive context for the teaching of these subjects.

20. In all schools, when teaching these subjects, the religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that the topics that are included in the core content in this guidance are appropriately handled. Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.

21. All schools may teach about faith perspectives. In particular, schools with a religious character may teach the distinctive faith perspective on relationships, and balanced debate may take place about issues that are seen as contentious. For example,

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the school may wish to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex.

22. In all schools, teaching should reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

Use of materials

23. There are a lot of excellent resources available, free-of-charge, which schools can draw on when delivering these subjects. Schools should assess each resource that they propose to use to ensure that it is appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, and sensitive to their needs.

24. Schools should also ensure that, when they consult with parents, they provide examples of the resources that they plan to use as this can be reassuring for parents and enables them to continue the conversations started in class at home.

25. In addition, there are varieties of resources targeted at young people that can be helpful to use to complement teaching in the classroom. Public Health England, for example, have produced a website for young people which covers a broad range of health issues in a format which is accessible for young people, targeted at secondary-age pupils. This includes [Rise Above resources](#) for lessons linked from the [PSHE Association website](#).

26. A list of some of the resources, which are available free-of-charge, can be found in Annex B.

Equality

27. Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Further guidance is available for schools in [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#) advice. Schools¹⁰ should pay particular attention to the [Public sector equality duty \(PSED\)](#) (s.149 of the Equality Act).

28. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership¹¹, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make

¹⁰ Equality Act provisions in relation to schools are in Part 6, Chapter 1. Independent schools are not subject to the PSED.

¹¹ In the rest of this guidance, references to marriage should be read as marriage and civil partnership.

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reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects.

29. Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic. This should be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects. A school, could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

30. Schools should consider the makeup of their own student body, including the gender and age range of their pupils, and consider whether it is appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with particular protected characteristics (which mean that they are potentially at greater risk). Schools should consider what they can do to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment, which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole-school approach.

31. Schools should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours. School pastoral and behaviour policies should support all pupils.

32. Schools should refer to the Department's advice, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#). The advice sets out what sexual violence and sexual harassment are, the current evidence on their preponderance in schools and colleges, how to minimise the risk of them occurring and what to do when they do occur or are alleged to have occurred. Schools should be aware of the importance of making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up. Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously; staff should be aware that statistically it is more likely that females will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment than males, and that it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by males. However, males can also be the victims of sexual violence and it can also happen in same-sex relationships. It is, however, essential that assumptions are not made about the behaviour of boys and young men and that they are not made to feel that this behaviour is an inevitable part of being male; most young men are respectful of young women and each other. An understanding for all pupils of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour and the right of everyone to equal treatment will help ensure that pupils treat each other well and go on to be respectful and kind adults.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

33. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who represent a large minority of pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Schools should also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes,¹² as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

34. Schools should be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors should be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects.

35. In special schools and for some SEND pupils in mainstream schools there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. As with all teaching for these subjects, schools should ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

36. In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

37. Schools should ensure that all of their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum.

¹² "Preparing for adulthood" outcomes are set out at section 7.38 of the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

Governors

38. As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing boards or management committee should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

39. Foundation governors and trustees of faith academy trusts will also have wider responsibilities in relation to maintaining and developing the religious ethos of the schools.

Working with parents/carers and the wider community

40. The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

41. All schools should work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when, and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

42. Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSE. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach help increase confidence in the curriculum.

43. Many schools build a good relationship with parents on these subjects over time – for example by inviting parents into school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues. This can be an important opportunity to talk about how these subjects contribute to wider support in terms of pupil wellbeing and keeping children safe. It is important through such processes to reach out to *all* parents, recognising that a range of approaches may be needed for doing so.

44. Many schools will have existing mechanisms in place to engage parents and should continue to draw on these as they respond to the new legal framework.

Right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)

45. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request it would be good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Schools will want to document this process to ensure a record is kept.

46. Good practice is also likely to include the head teacher discussing with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the

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detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead).

47. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

48. This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision. The approach outlined above should be reflected in the school's policy on RSE.

49. Head teachers will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum.

50. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Working with external agencies

51. Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people.

52. As with any visitor, schools are responsible for ensuring that they check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials. Schools should also ensure that the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with their planned programme and their published policy. It is important that schools discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils. Schools should ask to see the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan in advance, so that they can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs). It is important to agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy. Further information for teachers in handling potential safeguarding or child protection reports is on page 35.

53. Use of visitors should be to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of the teaching staff, rather than as a replacement for teaching by those staff.

Relationships Education (Primary)

54. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

55. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils should be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.

56. Respect for others should be taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

57. From the beginning, teachers should talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts should enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

58. The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers should address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers should include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

59. Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.

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60. A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as ‘virtues’) in the individual. In a school wide context which encourages the development and practice of resilience and other attributes, this includes character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils should develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

61. Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.

62. Through Relationships Education (and RSE), schools should teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In primary schools, this can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 marriage¹³ 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.
<p>Caring friendships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>Respectful relationships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

¹³ Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.

Managing difficult questions

63. Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education. The school's policy should cover how the school handles such questions. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.

64. Meeting these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of Relationships Education. Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods should take account of these differences (including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Schools should consider what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting, as teachers may require support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class.

Sex Education (Primary)

65. The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools and the content set out in this guidance therefore focuses on Relationships Education.

66. The content set out in this guidance covers everything that primary schools should teach about relationships and health, including puberty. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement.

67. It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born. As well as consulting parents more generally about the school's overall policy, primary schools should consult parents before the final year of primary school about the detailed content of what will be taught. This process should include offering parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school. Meeting

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these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of sex education. Teaching needs to take account of the developmental differences of children.

68. Where a maintained primary school chooses to teach aspects of sex education (which go beyond the national curriculum for science), the school must set this out in their policy and all schools should consult with parents on what is to be covered. Primary schools that choose to teach sex education must allow parents a right to withdraw their children. Unlike sex education in RSE at secondary, in primary schools, head teachers must comply with a parent's wish to withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science. Schools will want to draw on the good practice for conversations with parents around the right to withdraw as set out in paragraphs 45 and 46. Schools must also ensure that their teaching and materials are appropriate having regard to the age and religious backgrounds of their pupils. Schools will also want to recognise the significance of other factors, such as any special educational needs or disabilities of their pupils.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE): Secondary

69. The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

70. Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

71. Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This should be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Many teachers use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

72. RSE should provide clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education. Teachers should build on the foundation of Relationships Education and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, pupils should also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. This teaching should enable pupils to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful.

73. Pupils should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. They should be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing.

74. As in primary, secondary Relationships Education can be underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual. These should include character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility,

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kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth. There are many ways in which secondary schools should support the development of these attributes, for example by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.

75. Pupils should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. When teaching about these topics, it must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. There should be an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships. This should be integrated appropriately into the RSE programme, rather than addressed separately or in only one lesson.

76. It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

77. Schools may choose to explore faith, or other perspectives, on some of these issues in other subjects such as Religious Education.

78. Pupils should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs. Key aspects of the law relating to sex which should be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.

79. Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, should also be addressed sensitively and clearly. Schools should address the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM). They should also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM. As well as addressing this in the context of the law, pupils may also need support to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for oneself or others at risk. Schools should also be mindful that for pupils who are or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, the school may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where they can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support.

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80. Internet safety should also be addressed. Pupils should be taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This will include how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Pupils should have a strong understanding of how data is generated, collected, shared and used online, for example, how personal data is captured on social media or understanding the way that businesses may exploit the data available to them.

81. Some pupils are also exposed to harmful behaviours online, and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader Relationships Education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.

By the end of secondary school:

Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

Families	Pupils should know <ul style="list-style-type: none">• that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.• what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.• why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.• the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.• the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.• how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
Respectful relationships, including friendships	Pupils should know <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). • 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs. • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help. • that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control. • what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable. • the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.
Online and media	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. • about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. • not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them. • what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. • the impact of viewing harmful content. • that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners. • that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail. • how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
Being safe	<p>Pupils should know</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships. • how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
<p>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship. • that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. • the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women. • that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others. • that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. • the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available. • the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. • that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help). • how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing. • about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. • how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour. • how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

The Law

82. It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions. Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

Physical health and mental wellbeing

83. The aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. It should enable them to recognise what is normal and what is an issue in themselves and others and, when issues arise, know how to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources.

84. Physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa.

85. It is important for schools to promote pupils' self-control and ability to self-regulate, and strategies for doing so. This will enable them to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges. This integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing has a potential positive impact on behaviour and attainment.

86. Effective teaching should aim to reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular those to do with mental wellbeing. Schools should engender an atmosphere that encourages openness. This will mean that pupils feel they can check their understanding and seek any necessary help and advice as they gain knowledge about how to promote good health and wellbeing.

87. Schools have flexibility to design and plan age-appropriate subject content, but this guidance sets out core areas for health and wellbeing that are appropriate for primary and secondary aged pupils.

88. Puberty including menstruation should be covered in Health Education and should, as far as possible, be addressed before onset. This should ensure male and female pupils are prepared for changes they and their peers will experience.

Menstruation

89. The onset of menstruation can be confusing or even alarming for girls if they are not prepared. Pupils should be taught key facts about the menstrual cycle including what is an average period, range of menstrual products and the implications for emotional and physical health. In addition to curriculum content, schools should also make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation including with requests for menstrual products. Schools will need to consider the needs of their cohort of pupils in designing this content.

Physical health and mental wellbeing: Primary

90. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Teachers should be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.

91. This starts with pupils being taught about the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and giving pupils the language and knowledge to understand the normal range of emotions that everyone experiences. This should enable pupils to articulate how they are feeling, develop the language to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate for the situations that they experience.

92. Teachers should go on to talk about the steps pupils can take to protect and support their own and others' health and wellbeing, including simple self-care techniques, personal hygiene, prevention of health and wellbeing problems and basic first aid.

93. Emphasis should be given to the positive two-way relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing, and the benefits to mental wellbeing of physical exercise and time spent outdoors.

94. Pupils should also be taught the benefits of hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities. This teaching should make clear that people are social beings and that spending time with others, taking opportunities to consider the needs of others and practising service to others, including in organised and structured activities and groups (for example the scouts or girl guide movements), are beneficial for health and wellbeing.

95. Pupils should be taught about the benefits of rationing time spent online and the risks of excessive use of electronic devices. In later primary school, pupils should be taught why social media, computer games and online gaming have age restrictions and should be equipped to manage common difficulties encountered online.

96. A firm foundation in the benefits and characteristics of good health and wellbeing will enable teachers to talk about isolation, loneliness, unhappiness, bullying and the negative impact of poor health and wellbeing.

By the end of primary school:

Mental wellbeing	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.• that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings. • how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate. • the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness. • simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests. • isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support. • that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing. • where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online). • it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.
<p>Internet safety and harms</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits. • about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing. • how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private. • why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted. • that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health. • how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted. • where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

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Physical health and fitness	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle. • the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise. • the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity). • how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.
Healthy eating	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content). • the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals. • the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.
Health and prevention	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body. • about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. • the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. • about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. • about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing. • the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination
Basic first aid	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary. • concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

Changing adolescent body	<p>Pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes. • about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.
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Physical health and mental wellbeing: Secondary

97. It is important that the starting point for health and wellbeing education should be a focus on enabling pupils to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves. In secondary school, teaching should build on primary content and should introduce new content to older pupils at appropriate points. This should enable pupils to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and to understand why terms associated with mental and physical health difficulties should not be used pejoratively. This knowledge should enable pupils to understand where normal variations in emotions and physical complaints end and health and wellbeing issues begin.

98. Teaching about the impact of puberty, which will have started in primary school, should continue in secondary school, so that pupils are able to understand the physical and emotional changes, which take place at this time and their impact on their wider health and wellbeing.

99. Emphasis should continue to be given to steps pupils can take to protect and support their own health and wellbeing. They should know that there is a relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing and that this can also influence their ability to learn. Teachers should cover self-care, the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors. This should be linked to information on the benefits of sufficient sleep, good nutrition and strategies for building resilience.

100. Pupils should know the contribution that hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities can make to overall wellbeing. They should understand that humans are social beings and that outward-facing activity, especially that with a service focus (for example, work, volunteering and participation in organisations such as the scouts or the girl guiding movements, the National Citizen Service or the Duke of Edinburgh Award) are beneficial for wellbeing. This can also contribute to the development of the attributes for a happy and successful adult life. Pupils should be supported to recognise what makes them feel lonely. Self-focused or isolating lifestyle choices can lead to unhappiness and being disconnected from society for those who have greater need for companionship and relationships.

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101. Pupils should also be taught about problems and challenges. This should include factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions, drugs, alcohol and information about effective interventions. Schools may also choose to teach about issues such as eating disorders ¹⁴.

102. Teachers should be aware of common 'adverse childhood experiences' (such as family breakdown, bereavement and exposure to domestic violence) and when and how these may be affecting any of their pupils and so may be influencing how they experience these subjects. The impact of time spent online, the positive aspects of online support and negotiating social media, including online forums and gaming, should also be included. Teachers should understand that pupils who have experienced problems at home may depend more on schools for support.

103. Pupils should be taught how to judge when they, or someone they know, needs support and where they can seek help if they have concerns. This should include details on which adults in school (e.g. school nurses), and externally can help.

Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

Mental wellbeing	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.• that happiness is linked to being connected to others.• how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.• common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).• how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.• the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.
Internet safety and harms	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image, how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and

¹⁴ Eating disorders and extreme weight loss are a specialised area and schools should use qualified support or advice as needed. Schools may consider accessing support from the NHS or local specialist services who may be able to provide advice and CPD for teachers.

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	<p>information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.
Physical health and fitness	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress. • the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health. • about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.
Healthy eating	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions. • the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances. • the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood. • the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency. • awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks. • the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.
Health and prevention	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics. • about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist. • (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.• the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
Basic first aid	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• basic treatment for common injuries.• life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.¹⁵• the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.
Changing adolescent body	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.• the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

¹⁵ Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation is usually best taught after 12 years old.

Delivery and teaching strategies

National curriculum subjects: citizenship, science, computing and PE

104. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education complement several national curriculum subjects. Where schools are teaching the national curriculum, they should look for opportunities to draw links between the subjects and integrate teaching where appropriate. There continues to be no right of withdrawal from any part of the national curriculum.

105. The national curriculum for citizenship at key stages 3 and 4 aims to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. In particular, citizenship education should foster pupils' awareness and understanding of democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. Teaching should equip pupils with the knowledge to explore political and social issues, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments. It should also prepare pupils to take their place in society as responsible citizens, manage their money well and make sound financial decisions.

106. At key stages 1 and 2, the national curriculum for science includes teaching about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty. At key stage 3 and 4, it includes teaching about reproduction in humans; for example, the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS.

107. The national curriculum for computing aims to ensure that all pupils can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including logic, algorithms and data representation. It also covers e-safety, with progression in the content to reflect the different and escalating risks that young people face as they get older. This includes how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private, and where to go for help and support.

108. The national curriculum for PE aims to ensure that pupils develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and activities and lead healthy, active lives.

109. Schools need to consider how they can ensure that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education complement existing national curriculum subjects and whole school approaches to wellbeing and health. For example, health education can complement what is taught through PE by developing core knowledge and broader understanding that enables people to lead healthy, active lives and citizenship can

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complement all of the new subjects in the coverage of law. Schools should tailor their curriculum to meet the needs of their pupils.

Pupil Referral Units/Alternative Provision

110. Pupil referral units (PRUs), alternative provision (AP) academies and free schools and independent schools that provide AP are required to make provision for Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education in the same way as mainstream schools; and they must have regard to this guidance in delivering their programme. In teaching these subjects in PRUs, AP academies and free schools, and independent¹⁶ AP schools, specific thought should be given to the particular needs and vulnerabilities of the pupils.

Senior leadership and whole school approach

111. Schools which demonstrate effective practice often ensure clear responsibility for these subjects by a senior teacher in leadership position with dedicated time to lead specialist provision, e.g. a subject lead or co-ordinator.

112. All of these subjects should be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. For example, the curriculum on relationships and on sex should complement, and be supported by, the school's wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, bullying and safeguarding (including handling of any reports pupils may make as a result of the subject content). The subjects will sit within the context of a school's broader ethos and approach to developing pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally; and its pastoral care system. This is also the case for teaching about mental health within health education. The curriculum on health education should similarly complement, and be supported by, the school's wider education on healthy lifestyles through physical education, food technology, science, sport, extra-curricular activity and school food.

113. Schools should consider how their teaching can help support the development of important attributes in pupils, such as honesty, kindness, tolerance, courtesy, resilience and self-efficacy, as well as how those attributes are also developed by other aspects of the school's provision. The curriculum should proactively address issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on children's physical, emotional and sexual development. This should be in line with pupil need, informed by pupil voice and participation in curriculum development and in response to issues as they arise in the school and wider community.

¹⁶ Independent schools do not have to have regard to the guidance on Health Education, although they may find it helpful in planning.

Flexibility

114. Schools will retain freedom to determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people, is developed in consultation with parents and the local community. Schools must also comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act as noted earlier. Where appropriate this may also require a differentiated curriculum. Schools have specific duties to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.

115. Flexibility is important as it allows schools to respond to local public health and community issues, meet the needs of their community and adapt materials and programmes to meet the needs of pupils (for example in teaching about gangs or high local prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections).

Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

116. At the heart of these subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

117. Good practice allows children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children should be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This should include processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer.

118. KCSIE is clear that all staff should know what to do if a pupil tells them that they are being abused or neglected or are witnessing abuse. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

119. Good practice would be to involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) in anything that is safeguarding-related in the context of these subjects. They will potentially have knowledge of trusted, high quality local resources that could be engaged, links to the police and other agencies and the knowledge of any particular local issues which it may be appropriate to address in lessons.

120. Where a school invites external agencies in to support delivery of these subjects, they must agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding report should be dealt with by the external visitor. It is important that children understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what might happen if they choose to make a report.

121. There are some important points for teachers in terms of how they approach this content and how they consider their planning. When teaching the new subjects, schools should be aware that children may raise topics including self-harm and suicide. In talking about this content in the classroom, teachers must be aware of the risks of encouraging or making suicide seem a more viable option for pupils and avoid material being instructive rather than preventative. To avoid this, they should take care to avoid giving instructions or methods of self-harm or suicide and avoid using emotive language, videos or images. *Teacher Guidance: preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing*¹⁷ provides useful support for teachers in handling this material.

122. If teachers have concerns about a specific pupil in relation to self-harm or suicidal ideation or attempts, they must follow safeguarding procedures.

¹⁷ [Teacher Guidance: preparing to teach about mental health and wellbeing](#), PSHE association

Assessment

123. Schools should have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in these subjects as for other curriculum areas. A strong curriculum will build on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress.

124. Lessons should be planned to ensure that pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged. Teaching should be assessed and assessments used to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention.

125. Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for these subjects, there are some areas to consider in strengthening quality of provision, and which demonstrate how teachers can assess outcomes. For example, tests, written assignments or self-evaluations, to capture progress.

Accountability

126. Key aspects of Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education are in scope for Ofsted inspection; for example, through inspectors' consideration of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare; and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Annex A Regulations

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and provide that pupils receiving primary education must be taught Relationships Education, pupils receiving secondary education must be taught RSE and that all primary and secondary pupils must be taught Health Education. The new subjects of Relationships Education and RSE must be taught in all maintained schools, academies and independent schools. This includes pupil referral units, maintained special schools, special academies, and non-maintained special schools. All schools, except independent schools, must make provision for Health Education.

To give effect to the duty in section 34 of the 2017 Act and the power in section 35 of that Act, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 amend existing provisions in the Education Act 1996 and the Education Act 2002 and insert new provisions into the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015. The new provisions include a requirement for the Secretary of State to publish guidance on Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education; require schools to have regard to that guidance; require schools to make a statement of policy on their provision of Relationships Education and RSE; and set out the circumstances in which a pupil is to be excused from RSE.

The regulations and guidance in relation to Health Education do not apply to independent schools – they will continue to make provision for the health education element of PSHE under the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Annex B Suggested resources

Teaching resources

There are many excellent resources available, free of charge, which schools can draw on when delivering these subjects. Schools should assess each resource that they propose to use carefully to ensure it is appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils and sensitive to their needs, where relevant, schools should use resources that are medically accurate. Schools should also consider drawing on the expertise of the main subject associations who often quality assure third party resources. We also recognise that schools use resources from representative bodies (e.g. many Catholic and other schools draw on the model curricula provided by the Catholic Education Service.)

Schools should also ensure that, when they consult parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use, as this can be reassuring for parents, and enables them to continue the conversations started in class at home.

This is for illustrative purposes and is not an exhaustive list.

Relationships Education

Safeguarding: NSPCC PANTS rule with film <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/underwear-rule-schools-teaching-resources/>

Example of model primary curricula <http://catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/relationship-sex-education>

Relationships and Sex Education

Sexual health and relationships: up to date information on all aspects of sexual and reproductive health available at <https://sexwise.fpa.org.uk/> which teachers may find helpful for their knowledge

Abuse in relationships: Disrespect NoBody (Home Office and Government Equalities Office) <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/disrespect-nobody-teaching-resources-preventing>

Consent: PSHE Association lesson plans <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-teaching-about-consent-pshe-education-key>

LGBT inclusivity: Stonewall lesson plans and materials for primary and secondary <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/get-involved/education/different-families-same-love>

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Resources covering all contexts, including online, and specifically relationships and bullying, alcohol, smoking, stress, body image: Public Health England website with videos made by young people and resources tested with teachers

https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/rise-above/overview?WT.mc_id=RiseAboveforSchools_PSHEA_EdComs_Resource_listing_Sep17

Example model secondary curricula: <http://catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/relationship-sex-education>

Mental health

Mental health and emotional wellbeing: PSHE Association lesson plans

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and>

MindEd educational resources on children and young people's mental health

<https://www.minded.org.uk/>

Online safety

Education for a Connected World: UKCCIS framework of digital knowledge and skills for different ages and stages

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683895/Education_for_a_connected_world_PDF.PDF

Sexting: UKCCIS advice for schools on preventative education and managing reports of sexting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

Thinkuknow is the education programme from National Crime Agency (NCA)-Child Exploitation Online Programme (CEOP), which protects children both online and offline. The site offers materials for parents, teachers and pupils on a wide range of online safety issues and facts about areas such as digital footprints, recognising fake websites and checking URLs. <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

PSHE

PSHE Association Programme of study for KS1-5

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/programme-study-pshe-education-key-stages-1%E2%80%935>

Drugs and alcohol

Planning effective drug and alcohol education: Mentor-ADEPIS research and briefing papers with ideas for lessons <http://mentor-adepis.org/planning-effective-education/>

Extremism and radicalisation

Practical advice and information for teachers, teachers in leadership positions and parents on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation
www.educateagainsthate.com

Curriculum

[Non-statutory framework for Citizenship KS 1 and 2](#) (Non-statutory programme of study). Schools may wish to draw on the Citizenship programme of study in their planning.

Data to understand the health and wellbeing needs of the local school-age population

Public Health England's Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile-group/child-health> brings together a range of publicly available data, information, [reports](#), tools and resources on child and maternal health into one easily accessible hub.

It includes school-age health profiles: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile-group/child-health/profile/child-health-school-age>

and young people's health profiles: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile-group/child-health/profile/child-health-young-people>

The indicators allow areas to see how they perform against the national average and against other local areas. These tools, accompanied by local health intelligence, will be useful in supporting schools to identify and respond to the particular health and wellbeing needs of their local school-age population.

There are also early years profiles: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile-group/child-health/profile/child-health-early-years>

Annex C Cross-government strategies

These subjects support many cross-government strategies of which schools will want to be aware. Whilst we have not referenced all strategies or supporting documents, we have included some of the key areas below.

- [Transforming children and young people's mental health provision](#): a green paper. The green paper announced new support in and near schools and colleges to support children and young people with their mental health.
- The [drug strategy](#) 2017 sets out how the government and its partners, at local, national and international levels, will take new action to tackle drug misuse and the harms it causes.
- [Internet Safety Strategy](#) green paper sets out steps towards developing a coordinated strategic approach to online safety.
- The Children's Commissioner [Digital 5 A Day](#) provides a simple framework that reflects the concerns of parents as well as children's behaviours and needs.
- Government aims to significantly reduce England's rate of childhood obesity within the next ten years. The [childhood obesity plan](#) sets out the approach to reduce childhood obesity.
- [Guidance](#) from the Chief Medical Office (CMO) on how much physical activity people should be doing, along with supporting documents.
- Over the last 18 years, the teenage pregnancy rate has reduced by 60%. However, a continued focus is needed to maintain the downward trend and narrow inequalities in rates between and within local authorities. The [Teenage Pregnancy prevention framework](#) provides evidence based guidance for local authorities, including the important role of RSE and links to local sexual health services.
- Sustaining the downward trend and making further progress is one of the key objectives of the Department of Health and Social Care's [Framework for Sexual Health Improvement in England](#). These subjects provide a key opportunity to strengthen support for young people to develop healthy relationships and prevent early unplanned pregnancy.
- [Reproductive health - a public health issue](#). A consensus statement, data and women's experiences, covering reproductive health through the life course, from menstruation to menopause. (PHE. 2018)
- The cross-government [loneliness strategy](#), which sets out the Government's vision for supporting individuals, businesses and communities to build and maintain strong relationships.



Department
for Education

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APPENDIX

TWO

**A Model Catholic RSE Curriculum
by the Catholic Education Service**



A model Catholic Primary RSE curriculum

Autumn 2016

Introduction

Any teaching about love and sexual relationships in a Catholic school must be rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching about what it is to be truly human in Christ, what it means to live well in relationship with others and be presented within a positive framework of Christian virtue. For this reason, we encourage Catholic schools to speak about Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) rather than Sex and Relationship Education (SRE), since this emphasises the importance of healthy relationships to human well-being, as the core learning within an RSE curriculum.

Pedagogical principles

A good RSE programme must enshrine core pedagogical virtues – that it is, it must, above else, qualify as good education. Therefore, it will be:

Progressive & Developmental

The learning needs to reflect each stage of the development of the person. It needs to be part of both the Primary and Secondary phase of education and it needs to be appropriate to the age and stage of development of children and young people during the different phases of their education. It also needs to be continuous and developmental. It should be a process which is planned from beginning to end with one phase of education informing the work of the next so that children and young people can be led to a deeper and fuller understanding by degrees at a rate which corresponds to their maturing.

Differentiated

Schools must ensure that RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and is taught in a way that allows access to those pupils at different stages of cognitive and emotional development. Learning and teaching methods will need to be adapted and specialist resources and training will need to be provided for those with particular needs. Schools, therefore, should ensure that children with special educational needs and disabilities are not at any point withdrawn from RSE because of lack of resources and training or to catch up in other subjects.

Cross-curricular

Since a Catholic school is committed to the education of the whole person, teaching on relationships and sexuality needs to be reflected in each relevant part of the curriculum. Whilst, for example, some aspects of RSE will be more appropriately explored in science lessons and some more appropriately explored in RE lessons, each should be informed by the other. Each discipline should speak with consistency about the meaning of human love and the virtues that are enshrined in the Church's teaching on human love.

Integrated

A well-planned programme will not just ensure that there is correspondence between phases and across disciplines but will ensure that parents are fully involved in the planning and evaluation of the teaching of relationships and sexuality. Ideally, pupils should hear a consistent message about the meaning and value of human sexuality at home, in the parish and at school. This can only be achieved if the home, parish and school work to integrate the teaching of RSE.

Co-ordinated

None of these educational goals are possible if RSE is not given the time and importance it deserves by those who plan and implement its delivery in school. RSE must be taken seriously by school leaders; led properly by someone who has the time and expertise to co-ordinate the subject with dedication and commitment at a senior level; taught by those committed to doing it well; taught as part of a whole-school approach by those who are able to celebrate – not merely tolerate – the teaching of the Church on love and human sexuality.

Balanced

Whilst promoting Catholic virtues, schools should ensure that children and young people are offered a broad and balanced RSE programme which provides them with clear factual, scientific information when relevant and meets the statutory requirements placed on schools.

The structure of this model curriculum.

This model curriculum covers EYFS, KS1 and KS2 and is based on three core themes within which there will be broad overlap. It is adaptable to the age and ability of the pupils. The three themes are:

- **Created and loved by God** (this explores the individual)
The Christian imperative to love self, made in the image and likeness of God, shows an understanding of the importance of valuing and understanding oneself as the basis for personal relationships.
- **Created to love others** (this explores an individual's relationships with others)
God is love. We are created out of love and for love. The command to love is the basis of all Christian morality.
- **Created to live in community – local, national & global** (this explores the individual's relationships with the wider world)
Human beings are relational by nature and live in the wider community. Through our exchange with others, our mutual service and through dialogue, we attempt to proclaim and extend the Kingdom of God for the good of individuals and the good of society.

Each theme covers the core strands of 'Education in Virtue' and 'Religious Understanding' as well as strands which cover the PSHE content of the theme.

Christian virtue and RSE

Each theme begins with a statement of the virtues which are necessary to living well in relationship with others and these virtues should underpin the teaching but also should emerge as a consequence of it. Virtues are habits which are learned from experience, and are gained through imitation the same virtues being modelled by those who teach. They express the qualities of character that schools should seek to develop in their pupils, through their exemplification by the whole community of which the pupils are a part. These virtues reflect our Christian tradition but they are also, of course, fundamental human virtues which are universally shared.

Theme 1: Created and Loved by God

EYFS & KS1

KS2

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Education in virtue</p>	<p>In a Catholic school, pupils are growing to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.1.1. Respectful of their own bodies and character 1.1.1.2. Appreciative for blessings 1.1.1.3. Grateful to others and to God 1.1.1.4. Patient when they do not always get what they want 	<p>In a Catholic school, pupils are growing to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1.1.1. Respectful of their own bodies, character and giftedness 2.1.1.2. Appreciative for blessings 2.1.1.3. Grateful to others and to God 2.1.1.4. Self-disciplined and able to delay or forego gratification for the sake of greater goods 2.1.1.5. Discerning in their decision making 2.1.1.6. Determined and resilient in the face of difficulty 2.1.1.7. Courageous in the face of new situations and in facing their fears
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Religious understanding of the human person: loving myself</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.2.1. We are made by God and are special 1.1.2.2. We are all God's children 1.1.2.3. Ways of expressing gratitude to God 1.1.2.4. About the sacrament of Baptism 	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1.2.1. We are special people made in the image and likeness of God 2.1.2.2. We are children of God with an innate dignity 2.1.2.3. God has created us for a purpose (vocation) 2.1.2.4. Life is precious and their body is God's gift to them 2.1.2.5. Prayer and worship are ways of nourishing their relationship with God 2.1.2.6. Sacraments often coincide with different natural stages in life, for example Baptism often occurs near birth for Catholics.

Me, my body and my health	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Me</p> <p>1.1.3.1. We are all unique individuals</p> <p>1.1.3.2. We all have individual gifts, talents and abilities</p> <p>My body</p> <p>1.1.3.1. The names of the external parts of the body</p> <p>1.1.3.2. The similarities and differences between girls and boys</p> <p>My Health</p> <p>1.1.3.3. How to maintain personal hygiene</p> <p>1.1.3.4. What constitutes a healthy life-style, including physical activity, dental health and healthy eating.</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Me</p> <p>2.1.3.1. Everyone expresses their uniqueness in different ways and that being different is not always easy</p> <p>2.1.3.2. Strategies to develop self-confidence and self-esteem</p> <p>2.1.3.3. Each person has a purpose in the world</p> <p>2.1.3.4. That similarities and differences between people arise from several different factors (See protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010, Part 2, Chapter 1, sections 4-12)</p> <p>My body</p> <p>2.1.3.5. Their body will change and develop as they grow</p> <p>2.1.3.6. About the growth and development of humans and the changes experienced during puberty</p> <p>2.1.3.7. The names of the main parts of the body, including identifying and correctly naming genitalia (e.g. penis and vagina)</p> <p>My health</p> <p>2.1.3.8. How to make informed choices that have an impact on their health</p>
Emotional well-being and attitudes	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Emotional well-being</p> <p>1.1.4.1. That we all have different likes and dislikes</p> <p>1.1.4.2. A language to describe feelings</p> <p>Attitudes</p> <p>1.1.4.3. A basic understanding that feelings and actions are two different things</p> <p>1.1.4.4. Simple strategies for managing feelings and behaviour</p> <p>1.1.4.5. That choices have consequences</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Emotional well-being</p> <p>2.1.4.1. Their emotions may change as they approach as they grow and move through puberty</p> <p>2.1.4.2. To extend their vocabulary to deepen their understanding of the range and intensity of their feelings</p> <p>2.1.4.3. What positively and negatively affects their physical, mental and emotional health (including the media)</p> <p>2.1.4.4. To recognise how images in the media do not always reflect reality and can affect how people feel about themselves</p> <p>Attitudes</p> <p>2.1.4.5. That some behavior is unacceptable, unhealthy or risky</p> <p>2.1.4.6. Strategies to build resilience in order to identify and resist unacceptable pressure from a variety of sources</p>

EYFS & KS1

KS2

Life cycles and fertility	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Life cycles</p> <p>1.1.5.1. That there are life stages from birth to death</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Life cycles</p> <p>2.1.5.1. How a baby grows and develops in its mother's womb</p> <p>2.1.5.2. To recognise the differences that occur at each stage of a human being's development (including childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age)</p> <p>Fertility</p> <p>2.1.5.3. The nature and role of menstruation in the fertility cycle</p> <p>2.1.5.4. How human life is conceived in the womb, including the language of sperm and ova</p>
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Theme 2: Created to love others

EYFS & KS1

KS2

Education in virtue	<p>In a Catholic school, pupils are growing to be:</p> <p>1.2.1.1. Friendly, able to make and keep friends</p> <p>1.2.1.2. Caring, attentive to the needs of others and generous in their responses</p> <p>1.2.1.3. Respectful of others, their uniqueness, their wants and their needs</p> <p>1.2.1.4. Forgiving, able to say sorry and not hold grudges against those who have hurt them</p> <p>1.2.1.5. Courteous, learning to say, “please” and “thank you.”</p> <p>1.2.1.6. Honest, able to tell the difference between truth and lies</p>	<p>In a Catholic school, pupils are growing to be:</p> <p>2.2.1.1. Loyal, able to develop and sustain friendships</p> <p>2.2.1.2. Compassionate, able to empathise with the suffering of others and the generosity to help others in trouble</p> <p>2.2.1.3. Respectful, able to identify other people’s personal space and respect the ways in which they are different</p> <p>2.2.1.4. Forgiving, developing the skills to allow reconciliation in relationships</p> <p>2.2.1.5. Courteous in their dealings with friends and strangers</p> <p>2.2.1.6. Honesty, committed to living truthfully and with integrity</p>
Religious understanding of human relationships: loving others	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>1.2.2.1. We are part of God’s family</p> <p>1.2.2.2. That saying sorry is important and can help mend broken friendships</p> <p>1.2.2.3. Jesus cared for others</p> <p>1.2.2.4. That we should love other people in the same way Jesus loves us</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>2.2.2.1. Christians belong to the Church family which includes the school, parish and diocese</p> <p>2.2.2.2. The importance of forgiveness and reconciliation in relationships and some of Jesus' teaching on forgiveness</p> <p>2.2.2.3. The sacrament of marriage involves commitment and self-giving</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Personal Relationships</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>1.2.3.1. The characteristics of positive and negative relationships</p> <p>1.2.3.2. To identify special people (e.g. family, carers, friends) and what makes them special.</p> <p>1.2.3.3. There are different family structures and these should be respected</p> <p>1.2.3.4. How their behaviour affects other people and that there are appropriate and inappropriate behaviours</p> <p>1.2.3.5. To recognise when people are being unkind to them and others and how to respond.</p> <p>1.2.3.6. Different types of teasing and bullying which are wrong and unacceptable.</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>2.2.3.1. How to maintain positive relationships and strategies to use when relationships go wrong.</p> <p>2.2.3.2. There are different types of relationships including those between acquaintances, friends, relatives and family</p> <p>2.2.3.3. How to make informed choices in relationships and that choices have positive, neutral and negative consequences</p> <p>2.2.3.4. An awareness of bullying (including cyber-bullying) and how to respond</p> <p>2.2.3.5. About harassment and exploitation in relationships, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse and how to respond</p> <p>2.2.3.6. To recognise and manage risk, to develop resilience and learn how to cope with “dares” and other ways in which people can be pressurized</p> <p>2.2.3.7. About changes that can happen in life, e.g. loss, separation, divorce and bereavement and the emotions that can accompany these changes.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Keeping safe and people who can help me</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Keeping safe</p> <p>1.2.4.1. To recognise safe and unsafe situations and ways of keeping safe, including simple rules for keeping safe online</p> <p>1.2.4.2. To use simple rules for resisting pressure when they feel unsafe or uncomfortable</p> <p>1.2.4.3. The difference between good and bad secrets</p> <p>1.2.4.4. Identifying and correctly name their “private parts” (see NSPCC resource PANTS) for the purposes of safeguarding them from sexual exploitation.</p> <p>People who can help me</p> <p>1.2.4.5. Who to go to if they are worried or need help</p> <p>1.2.4.6. That there are a number of different people and organisations they can go to for help in different situations.</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>Keeping safe</p> <p>2.2.4.1. To recognise their increasing independence brings increased responsibility to keep themselves and others safe</p> <p>2.2.4.2. How to use technology safely</p> <p>2.2.4.3. That not all images, language and behavior are appropriate</p> <p>2.2.4.4. To judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable and how to respond</p> <p>People who can help me</p> <p>2.2.4.5. That there are a number of different people and organisations they can go to for help in different situations and how to contact them</p> <p>2.2.4.6. How to report and get help if they encounter inappropriate materials or messages</p>

Theme 3: Created to live in community (local, national and global)

EYFS & KS1

KS2

Education in virtue	<p>In a Catholic school, pupils are growing to be:</p> <p>1.3.1.1. Just and fair in their treatment of other people, locally, nationally and globally</p> <p>1.3.1.2. People who serve others, locally, nationally and globally</p> <p>1.3.1.3. Active in their commitment to bring about change</p>	<p>In a Catholic school, pupils are growing to be:</p> <p>2.3.1.1. Just, understanding the impact of their actions locally, nationally and globally</p> <p>2.3.1.2. Self-giving, able to put aside their own wants in order to serve others locally, nationally and globally</p> <p>2.3.1.3. Prophetic in their ability to identify injustice and speak out against it locally, nationally and globally</p>
Religious understanding of the importance of human communities	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>1.3.2.1. That God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit</p> <p>1.3.2.2. Some scripture illustrating the importance of living in community</p> <p>1.3.2.3. Jesus' teaching on who is my neighbour</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>2.3.2.1. God is Trinity – a communion of persons</p> <p>2.3.2.2. The key principles of Catholic Social Teaching</p> <p>2.3.2.3. The Church is the Body of Christ</p>
Living in the wider world	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>1.3.3.1. That they belong to various communities such as home, school, parish, the wider local community and the global community</p> <p>1.3.3.2. That their behavior has an impact on the communities to which they belong</p> <p>1.3.3.3. That people and other living things have needs and that they have responsibilities to meet them;</p> <p>1.3.3.4. About what harms and improves the world in which they live</p> <p>1.3.3.5. How diseases are spread and can be controlled and the responsibilities they have for their own health and that of others e.g. washing hands</p>	<p>Pupils should be taught:</p> <p>2.3.3.1. That there are some cultural practices which are against British law and universal rights (e.g. honour based violence and forced marriage, human trafficking etc.)</p> <p>2.3.3.2. That actions such as female genital mutilation (FGM) constitute abuse, are crimes and how to get support if they have fears for themselves or their peers</p> <p>2.3.3.3. That bacteria and viruses can affect health and that following simple routines and medical interventions can reduce their spread</p> <p>2.3.3.4. About the range of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and beyond and the importance of living in right relationship with one another</p>

APPENDIX

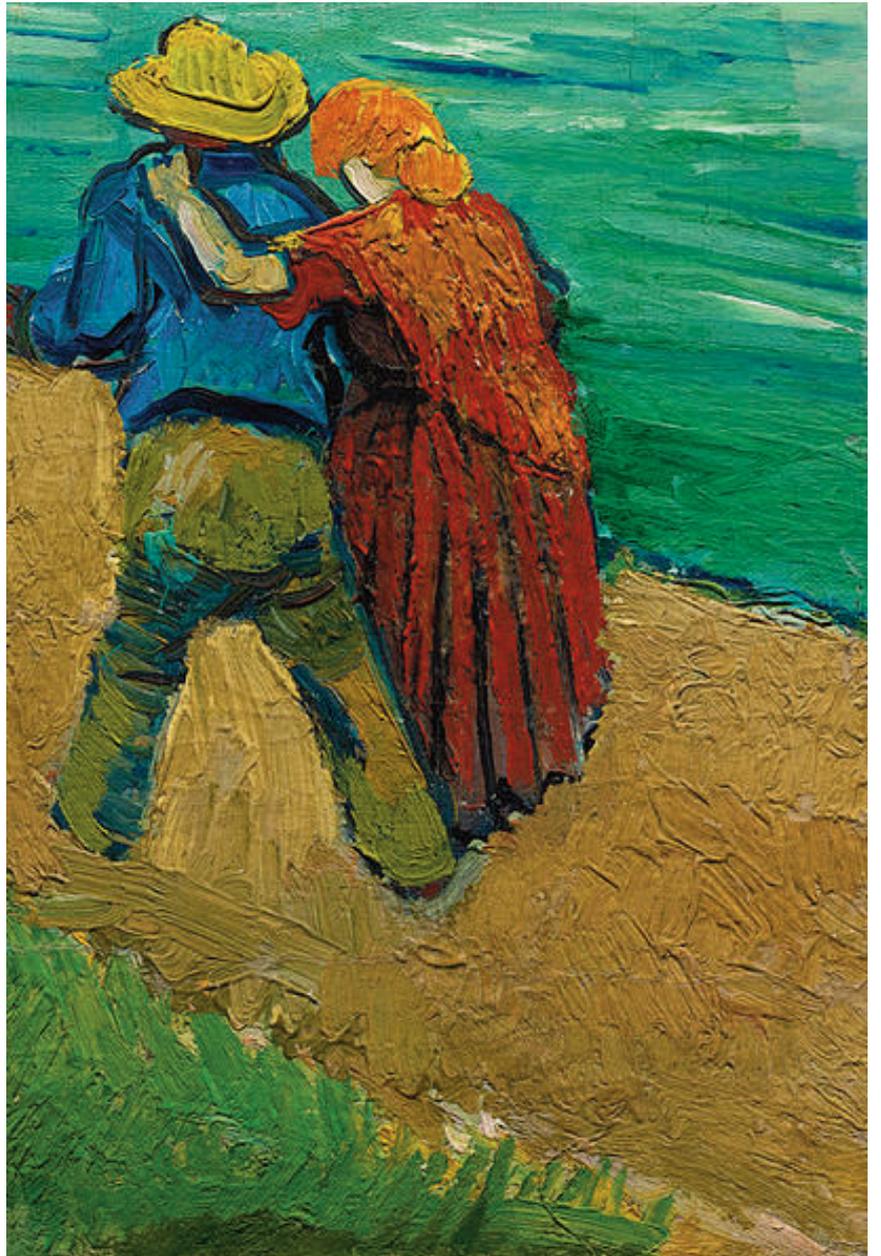
THREE

**Learning to Love: An introduction to Catholic Relationship
and Sex Education (RSE) for Catholic Educators**

by the Bishops of England and Wales

learning to love

*An introduction to
Catholic Relationship
and Sex Education
(RSE) for Catholic
Educators*



Department of Catholic Education and Formation
Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales

Learning to Love
Department of Catholic Education and Formation
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Published March 2017

Cover image:
Two Lovers, Vincent Van Gogh (*private collection*)

Back cover:
Children reading, Pekka Halonen (*Espoo Museum of Modern Art*)

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introduction

On 20th March 2016 Pope Francis published a document which he entitled *Amoris Laetitia* (The Joy of Love) . In this teaching document, the Pope gathered together the fruits of reflections and discussions with Bishops and theologians from all over the world on a broad range of issues affecting family life. It is an inspirational document, rich with insights and fresh descriptions of the Church's teaching on this vital subject.

The publication of *Amoris Laetitia* coincided with Pope Francis' Year of Mercy which drew to an end in November 2016. It is very appropriate that this theme of mercy should permeate *Amoris Laetitia*, because however much joy there is in loving, difficulties and failures are commonplace in every relationship.

Pope Francis devotes the seventh chapter of *Amoris Laetitia* to the difficulties young people face in finding ways to express and experience love that brings true joy, rather than insecurity and anguish. And a challenge is issued:

The Second Vatican Council spoke of the need for 'a positive and prudent sex education' to be imparted to children and adolescents 'as they grow older'... We may well ask ourselves if our educational institutions have taken up this challenge.'

Amoris Laetitia (AL) 280

“All of us spend our entire lives learning how to love. We never stop learning...”

To mark the first anniversary of *Amoris Laetitia*, we have taken up this challenge to guide all of those charged with helping young people in particular to confront these difficulties. We offer this document as an introduction to the subject, and have given it the title *Learning to Love*.

All of us spend our entire lives learning how to love. We never stop learning because all of our efforts will be imperfect, since we are imperfect human creatures, essentially in need of the grace of God and of His merciful healing. Marital love, which lies at the heart of *Amoris Laetitia*, and which we see as the model of all loving relationships, is a continuous lesson in learning how to love, with the family as a school of loving where parents and children learn from each other how to love, and how not to love. In the course of this document we will quote extensively from *Amoris Laetitia*, which contains so much of value that can be used to animate the lessons in love we need to impart to our children and young people.

“Parents have the prime responsibility in teaching their children how to build healthy, loving relationships, and our Catholic schools play a vital part in supporting parents.”

Parents have the prime responsibility in teaching their children how to build healthy, loving relationships, but our Catholic schools play a vital part in supporting parents.

We expect all Catholic schools to ensure that space is made in the curriculum for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE).

The content of what is taught must express the teaching of the Church, and should be delivered to suit the age of the children or young people to whom it is addressed. We all need to recognise that

without providing an education in this area, we leave many young people vulnerable to receiving their education second-hand, and often from sources which damage them and their capacity to love.

This document is written for those who are engaged in the development and presentation of the broad range of subjects which are covered in such a course of study. For those who wish to deepen their knowledge of the Church’s teaching, it concludes with a list of suggested further reading.

We hope *Learning to Love* will inspire teachers to help them present the Church's teaching effectively and engagingly. But also we hope that it will inspire parents as the primary educators of their children, those engaged in catechesis, in further education, in parishes, and more widely in the Church at large, for none of us can stop learning lessons in love.

Our purpose is to show why the Church's teaching on matters relating to building loving relationships and the role of the sexual expression of love is liberating, rather than imprisoning. For us, ‘sex education’ is a rootless and diminished field of study, unless it is situated more broadly in healthy, loving relationships:

It is not easy to approach the issue of sex education in an age when sexuality tends to be trivialised and impoverished. It can only be seen within the broader framework of an education for love, for mutual self-giving. In such a way, the language of sexuality would not be sadly impoverished but illuminated and enriched.

Amoris Laetitia (AL) 280

“...we all need to learn lessons in love, and to find joy and fulfilment in life.”

Important as all this is in helping to articulate the teaching of the Church, we want especially to present the Church's teaching in the light of Sacred Scripture, the source of God's will revealed in His inspired Word.

It is therefore essential to make God's Word our starting point as we reflect on what His Word tells us about learning to love.

Lastly, we would like to draw attention to the cover picture we have chosen for this document. It is a painting by Vincent Van Gogh, and it depicts a couple, struggling along, arm in arm, supporting each other as they battle through life. There is nothing particularly religious about this picture. As the front cover of a document on love produced by the Bishops of the Catholic Church, the image serves to remind us that *we all* need to learn lessons in love, and to find joy and fulfilment in life.

chapter 1 - our incomplete identity

We are clothed, or we clothe ourselves in complex layers of identity. We present ourselves to the world as we would like to be seen. Some of these identities we adopt to cover up what we perceive as human weaknesses, some of them we acquire to enable us to fulfil our vocation in life, and beneath all of these, at the most basic level, lies the biological identity which we receive at the moment of our conception.

Our faith teaches that beneath these foundations we experience a crisis of identity. In the first account of our creation in the Bible, we read how we are made in God's image, and in the next breath, made male and female. Only then does God recognise His self-portrait as being 'very good':

God created man in His own image in the image of God He created him; made and female He created them. And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good.
Genesis 1:27-31

However in the next chapter of Genesis, in another account, we hear how God made His self-portrait only to break it apart, so as to create a companion, because otherwise he would be lonely:

It is not good that the man should be alone; So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God and taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.
Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.
Gen 2:18a.21-.24-25

Adam and Eve, to whom we look in order to learn about our human nature, are presented in this account as dependent upon each other.

And that is how it should be, since in being dependent, we more perfectly conform to how God meant us to be.

The Creation of Eve, Michaelangelo, in the Sistine Chapel



However, as we know, the story of Adam and Eve takes a tragic turn when these models of dependency try to become complete in themselves and independent of God. The tragic result is that they become alienated not only from God but from each other, and certainly no less dependent than they were previously. All of this serves to remind us that we aren't meant to be alone; we 'make sense' only in relationship with each other, and of all loving human relationships, the foremost is marital love. So it seems a fitting way to begin here with some reflections on the institution of marriage.

The Christian Tradition calls marriage between a man and a woman 'Holy Matrimony' and, between the baptised, a 'Sacrament'. This is because the two parts of God's self-portrait come together definitively. The two become one, and the picture is complete, or as complete as it can ever be while we live away from Almighty God in this imperfect world.

All relationships point towards the relationship we have with our Creator, and prepare us for its fulfilment in the world to come. And so from the outset of their coming together in marriage, the newly married couple have to learn how to lean on each other:

Married life is a process of growth, in which each spouse is God's means of helping the other to mature...Fostering growth means helping a person to shape his or her own identity. Love is thus a kind of craftsmanship...At every new stage, they can keep "forming" one another. Love makes each wait for the other with the patience of a craftsman, a patience which comes from God.

AL 221

So, far, in all of the above, marriage has been pictured as a relationship in which the couple are inward looking. But for the relationship to grow, the two need to join together in loving away from themselves. In this way, their marriage bears fruit. The marital love of husband and wife bears fruit especially (but not exclusively) in the new life which children bring to them:

The Word of God tells us that the family is entrusted to a man, a woman and their children, so that they may become a communion of persons in the image of the union of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Begetting and raising children, for its part, mirrors God's creative work.

AL 29

Let us reflect now on the role of children within the family. Children complete the family; they share equally in the dignity accorded to their parents and are also made in the image of God. This, their parents can too easily overlook. But they are also vulnerable and remind their parents of the great challenge of parenthood

which grows no less, as their children continue to grow into adulthood:

The overall education of children is a “most serious duty” and at the same time a “primary right” of parents. This is not just a task or a burden, but an essential and inalienable right that parents are called to defend and of which no one may claim to deprive them.

AL 84

“When a couple have children to pray with, they lose their self-consciousness, and learn how to pray as a family.”

In their role as the primary educators, we take this opportunity to encourage parents to make the family home a place of prayer. It is when the family pray together that they most openly express their radical dependence upon God’s mercy. In praying together they continually remind each other of their equality of need before him, and of his paternal love to all of his children - whether they call themselves adults or not.

When a couple have children to pray with, they lose their self-consciousness, and learn how to pray as a family. They practise the virtue of humility when they join their children in prayer. Moreover, by exercising the virtue of humility in the family cradle of prayer, we have a daily reminder of our identity as radically dependent, flawed creatures.

And this prayerful humility helps the family learn how to live alongside each other rather than over each other:

Jesus told his disciples that in a world where power prevails, each tries to dominate the other, but “it shall not be so among you” (Mt 20:26). The inner logic of Christian love is not about importance and power; rather, “whoever would be first among you must be your slave” (Mt 20:27). In family life, the logic of domination and competition about who is the most intelligent or powerful destroys love.

AL 98

These fleeting observations on marital love set the standard for anyone wishing to learn lessons in love. There is a lot more in *Amoris Laetitia* to inspire and support spouses and their families in their lifelong vocation, though nothing ought to distract attention from the importance of forgiveness in any loving relationship. But what of those young people who naturally crave to learn lessons in love yet aren't ready to exercise their vocation to love, whether in marriage or in some other way?

Those of us who are older can easily forget how important it once was to feel as though we are lovable, or to experience the almost painfully intense desire to express love for another.

And what of those who aren't called to marriage? We take this opportunity to say that our Catholic schools should always be places where all young people can begin to discern how God is calling them to find true happiness.

“... our Catholic schools should always be places where all young people can begin to discern how God is calling them to find true happiness.”

Just in the way that a school provides career advice, so it should ensure that the question of discerning God's will is one that is raised throughout their time in school.

We recognise that there are many whom it seems God doesn't yet call to recreate the Biblical picture of marital love, or will ever call.

And what of those who have more profound misgivings about the gender they were given at birth, and who wish to identify themselves differently than their body suggests?

The Church warns against a tendency to deny the sexual difference with which we were created, when we try to replace it with the idea that somehow our personal identity has only a casual reference to the bodies into which we were born:

It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality.

Let us not fall into the sin of trying to replace the Creator.

We are creatures, and not omnipotent. Creation is prior to us and must be received as a gift.

At the same time we are called to protect our humanity, and this means, in the first place, accepting it and respecting it as it was created.

AL 56

Human beings are not just souls or spirits or intellects. We are also bodies! We have one nature, a human nature that is both material and spiritual. Our bodies grow from being an embryo in the womb, through childhood into adulthood and old age. Our bodies change beyond all recognition.

They are indeed flawed, because they are not designed to last, but we need to accept these limitations and weaknesses as part of God's plan, as we journey towards the home that has been prepared for us:

We know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling — if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

2 Corinthians 5:1-4

Let us acknowledge that as well as living in 'incomplete' bodies, we all share in having identity 'flaws'. All of us are dependent and vulnerable, and all of us are bound to look outside of ourselves to find completion.

This insight ought to inform the character of Catholic education. Our schools need to be places where everyone feels valued for their innate dignity, even if young people are struggling to find themselves.

They also need to be places where pastoral support is at the forefront of what they provide, so that no-one is abandoned, even if some might fall away from the teaching of the Church in the manner of their living.

All of us, whatever our status, however we choose to identify ourselves, need to have a clear idea of what is implied when we talk about 'love'. We should never forget that beneath our human identity lies that fundamental incompleteness which paradoxically helps rather than hinders our learning to love, and which leads us to cultivate the art of forgiveness in all our relationships.

And lastly, whether or not we are called towards matrimonial love, we are all called to learn how to love in ways that best approximate to the definition of self-offering love as revealed to us in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. In the chapters that follow, the Church's teaching on sexual ethics is presented within this pattern of self-giving selfless love, and because each of us is capable of resembling Jesus, so we can say that the Church's teaching on sexual ethics flows from the commandment that was given such prominence by Jesus himself: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'.

“Our schools need to be places where everyone feels valued for their innate dignity, even if young people are struggling to find themselves.”

chapter 2 - the language of desire

Sacred Scripture opens to us the truth that God speaks in Words, and that His Word is active. In the opening words of the Bible, God's Word brings life into existence. Later, in the Law and Commandments, His Word communicates His nature to us and reveals how we can live in relationship with Him. Finally, and definitively, His Word culminates in becoming the means of our salvation:

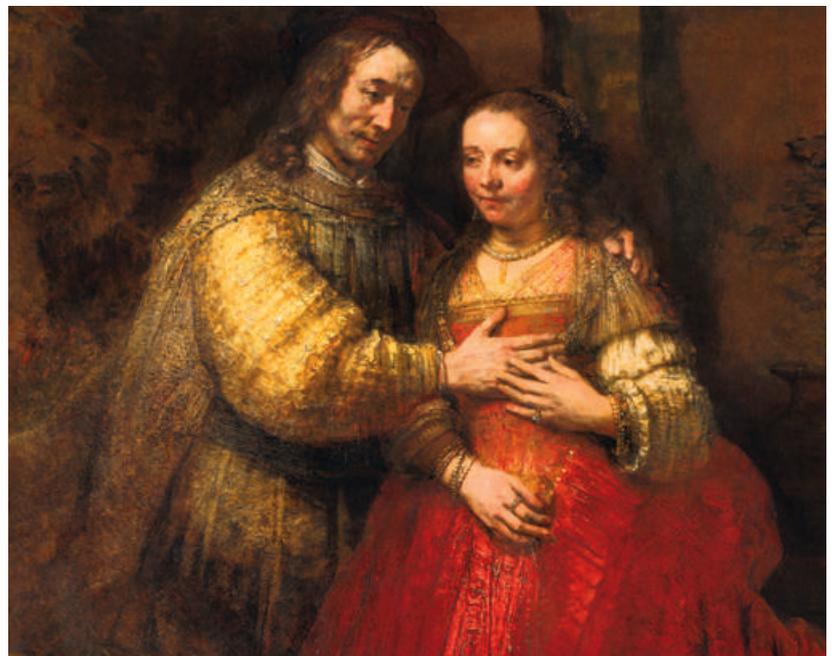
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him; yet the world did not know Him. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth.
John 1 :1-2.10.14

As God's self-portraits, however flawed, each of us instinctively realises that our words contain residual power; they can rise above the level of 'chatter' to potentially change things in the world that surrounds us, for good or bad. The words we use to convey love are rightly the most highly esteemed; in love songs and in poetry, our hearts are stirred and moved beyond measure, and in the promises made in marriage. It is through words that our very nature is changed as we bind ourselves to our spouse.

But the language of love stretches beyond words. We delight in depictions of beauty and love which have the power to affect us deeply, whether in art or film.

However, words and pictures also have the power to damage and diminish us to the point of enslavement, such as in pornography.

Although there is nothing new in this, the internet delivers words and images



The Jewish Bride, Rembrandt, (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)
that penetrate our daily lives far more profoundly than ever in the past, and sometimes with devastating effects.

In the same way, advances in social media enable and encourage users to do much more than keep in touch with people; they have become a way of projecting a self-image that can end up, paradoxically, damaging the image of the person behind the screen. Practices such as 'sexting' objectify and cheapen the bodies of living people, reducing them to a commodity for the entertainment of others:

It is not helpful to overwhelm [children and young people] with data without also helping them to develop a critical sense in dealing with the onslaught of new ideas and suggestions, the flood of pornography and the overload of stimuli that can deform sexuality. Young people need to realise that they are bombarded by messages that are not beneficial for their growth towards maturity. They should be helped to recognise and to seek out positive influences, while shunning the things that cripple their capacity for love. We also have to realise that "a new and more appropriate language" is needed "in introducing children and adolescents to the topic of sexuality".

AL 281

Responsible parents begin this process of formation for their children from a young age, and it is at the forefront of what they hope to find for their children in a good school. Indeed, we encourage our own Catholic schools to see this formation as a primary objective in their mission to educate for life. But parents could learn from the example set by schools in protecting their children from damaging internet content, so that whether at school or in the privacy of the family home, children are protected from damaging material that can overwhelm and in Pope Francis' words 'cripple our capacity for love'.

Besides words and pictures, love is communicated especially in our actions, the highest and most noble of which is sexual intercourse. In us, of all God's creatures, sexual intercourse is more than a means to generate new life. In us, the creation of new life comes as a consequence of the expression of desire.

We are driven by desires, which escalate from simple biological desires such as for food and drink, through the desire to acquire material goods for our well-being, to the higher desire of acquiring talents and virtues, up to the summit of all desires, which is to love:

Earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned but have not love, I gain nothing.

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3

In writing this passage to the Corinthians, St. Paul presupposes that they are already mastering their desires, trying to acquire an appetite for the 'higher things'. We too learn to acquire appetites for things which don't immediately seem desirable: the desire to take exercise for example. Such a desire is acquired through controlling our natural instincts in order to satisfy a greater desire, which in this case might be to feel or look healthy.

Our innate desire to express love in the act of 'making love', is natural and good but, like all of our desires, it too needs to be owned and oriented to a higher good. To accomplish this, we need to learn the art of being patient and self-controlled. Patience isn't something that comes naturally to us, especially when we are young.

We want everything now, and in the affluent culture in which we live, we come to expect that we can get things instantly. This impatience carries over into what we are led to expect in relationships which need time to grow into love.

“...we hope that imaginative ways can be found to foster the idea that being patient brings greater rewards, greater happiness and psychological stability.”

At the heart of any Catholic Relationship and Sex Education programme aimed at young people, we hope that imaginative ways can be found to foster the idea that being patient brings greater rewards, greater happiness and psychological stability.

Alongside patience, and linked to it, we want to promote an appreciation of a proper understanding of the virtue of chastity, and how important it is in any relationship.

In practising chastity, we are promoting a mature response to emotions, ordered towards finding ways to celebrate love that preserve dignity, and allow appreciative love to blossom and bear fruit. Young people should come to see that the practice of patience and chastity are powerful signs that they are growing in maturity.

Patience and chastity are qualities we associate with maturity. Sadly, for one reason or another, many of us remain immature in this respect:

There are those who feel themselves capable of great love only because they have a great need for affection, yet they prove incapable of the effort needed to bring happiness to others. They remain caught up in their own needs and desires. In such cases, emotions distract from the highest values and conceal a self-centredness that makes it impossible to develop a healthy and happy family life.

AL 145

As we have seen, most of our desires come from feeling incomplete, and in need of something from the 'outside' to feel satisfied. In taking what we think will satisfy us, we often 'consume' the object of our desire, and assimilate it into ourselves, such as food.

That would be natural and good, if the desire was truly oriented towards our wellbeing. However, there are desires, such as for money or possessions, which can become addictive and which never bring fulfilment because they aren't necessarily oriented towards the greater good of ourselves, our relationships, or indeed, of our society. In addition to the damage they can do to us as their subjects, uncontrolled desire can do great damage to those that surround us:

Consideration needs to be given to the growing danger represented by an extreme individualism which weakens family bonds and ends up considering each member of the family as an isolated unit, leading in some cases to the idea that one's personality is shaped by his or her desires, which are considered absolute.

AL 33

We need to be encouraged or inspired to control such desires, and here again for young people this is a responsibility which is shared between parents and the school, drawing support from the parish in its formation programmes. All of us have to struggle against the temptation to let desires 'shape' our lives, but it is a struggle that is greatly eased if we help each other to confront them.

In all of this, the desire to be possessive of people is at work. However important someone else might be in seeming to provide something which we lack, if the desire for that person becomes possessive, the relationship is unbalanced and potentially damaging:

We do not have to control the other person, to follow their every step lest they escape our grip. Love trusts, it sets free, it does not try to control, possess and dominate everything. This freedom, which fosters independence, an openness to the world around us and to new experiences, can only enrich and expand relationships.

AL 232

Such possessiveness is often first evident in the school playground, especially amongst those who feel insecure. Lessons learnt there have the potential to become ingrained as a behavioural pattern which continues into adulthood. For this reason, prudent education in the art of making friends is another important part of what we call Relationship and Sex Education.

While possessiveness can diminish the freedom that young people need to mature, it can be even more damaging to abandon them, leaving them to their own devices. In this, far from showing respect, we risk depriving them of the security and wellbeing which they are owed at an age when they are often particularly vulnerable.

Everyone charged with a duty of care for young people has a responsibility to be protective, rather than possessive. For this reason we must all reaffirm our commitment to the culture of safeguarding which we rightly strive to embed in our society and its institutions.

In Jesus, we have the model of perfect desiring love. He invites us to draw near and live within His love as if we were 'pitching our tent' within the shelter of His embrace. This is always and simply an invitation; there is no compunction to abide in His love, other than the prospect of depriving ourselves of joy if we refuse:

Jesus said to His disciples, 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.'

John 15: 9-12

“Jesus challenges us to love one another as He has loved us, and not in a possessive, diminishing way.”

Jesus challenges us to love one another as He has loved us, and not in a possessive, diminishing way. He offers all of us, His loved ones, the chance to think of love as a state of life in imitation of Him, rather than a transient series of loving encounters.

In the next chapter, we explore another way to learn how to love as he loved us.

chapter 3 - appreciative love

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

In this passage from his same letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul provides a wonderful description of love.

An entire chapter of *Amoris Laetitia* is devoted to meditating on this 'lyrical passage' which 'describes the features of true love' (AL90). These features illustrate a quality of love that is different from the more conventionally recognisable one presented in the last chapter. It describes love in the ordinary daily business of living in companionship. It is the sort of love that grows in the face of adversity:

The life of every family is marked by all kinds of crises, yet these are also part of its dramatic beauty. Couples should be helped to realise that surmounting a crisis need not weaken their relationship; instead, it can improve, settle and mature the wine of their union...Each crisis becomes an apprenticeship in growing closer together or learning a little more about what it means to be married.

AL 232

This form of love, born out of companionship, is closer to the quality of love which the ancients valued so highly, called *philia* by the ancient Greeks or *amicitia* by the Romans, which is translated as 'friendship' in English. But our word friendship is too banal and overused in everyday language to properly convey the real sense of *philia*.

CS Lewis wrote an excellent book on love (*The Four Loves*) in which he coins the expression that we have used as this chapter heading - Appreciative Love:

[Appreciative love] is not a reward for our discriminating and good taste in finding one another out. It is the instrument by which God reveals to each of us the beauties of others. This love, free from instinct, free from all duties but those which love has freely assumed, almost wholly free from jealousy, and free without qualification from the need to be needed, is eminently spiritual. It is the sort of love one can imagine between angels. Have we found a natural love which is love itself?

CS Lewis, 'The Four Loves'

To love someone in this way is not to desire them for ourselves, but to desire for them what we would desire for ourselves. This is the quality of love enshrined in the solemn promises that couples make to each other in marriage when they promise to love and to honour each other for the rest of their lives.



Two Friends, Daniel Ridgeway (private collection)

We 'honour' or admire people for qualities of character which we have grown to recognise in them.

Appreciative love is the sort of love which grows in a good marriage when physical desire begins to fade with age. In that sense it is a love that 'never ends'. It is the sort of love that ought to be prevalent between members of the family - parents to children as well as children to parents:

Tenderness, on the other hand, is a sign of a love free of selfish possessiveness. It makes us approach a person with immense respect and a certain dread of causing them harm or taking away their freedom. Loving another person involves the joy of contemplating and appreciating their innate beauty and sacredness, which is greater than my needs.

This enables me to seek their good even when they cannot belong to me, or when they are no longer physically appealing but intrusive and annoying. For "the love by which one person is pleasing to another depends on his or her giving something freely"

AL 127

For those in a state of appreciative love, what St. Paul says to the Corinthians at the start of the chapter or in this passage from his letter to the Romans below would come naturally:

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord.

Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

Romans 12: 9-11

Let us draw as a conclusion from reading these scriptural passages that all of us, as disciples of Christ, are called to practise appreciative love.

It is a high form of love, and we are all encouraged in faith to recognise its value and engage in purifying our love for each other by celebrating our best qualities:

The aesthetic experience of love is expressed in that “gaze” which contemplates other persons as ends in themselves, even if they are infirm, elderly or physically unattractive.

Love opens our eyes and enables us to see, beyond all else, the great worth of a human being. The joy of this contemplative love needs to be cultivated. Since we were made for love, we know that there is no greater joy than that of sharing good things: “Give, take, and treat yourself well” (Sir 14:16). The most intense joys in life arise when we are able to elicit joy in others, as a foretaste of heaven.

AL 128/9

“...the language of love is not confined to sexual expression...”

Here we would like to emphasise that this exalted form of love exists just as powerfully in relationships between people of the same sex as it does in heterosexual relationships.

We applaud the great progress that has been made in countering all forms of discrimination against homosexuality in recent times, and wish to collaborate with efforts to make such discrimination obsolete:

Learning to love encompasses a range of relationships not just sexual ones, because human beings flourish through various and different relationships with other people.

God’s gift of friendship is a way of loving, and while sexual loving presupposes friendship, friendship does not require full sexual involvement.

Cardinal Basil Hume, A note on the teaching of the Catholic Church concerning homosexuality, 8 April 1997

We finish this chapter by reiterating that the language of love is not confined to sexual expression, and that appreciative love is an exalted expression of love in its purest form, the love that our Lord Jesus had for His disciples, and it is the quality of love which we should all be ambitious to cultivate:

The love of friendship is called “charity” when it perceives and esteems the “great worth” of another person. Beauty – that “great worth” which is other than physical or psychological appeal – enables us to appreciate the sacredness of a person, without feeling the need to possess it...Loving another person involves the joy of contemplating and appreciating their innate beauty and sacredness, which is greater than my needs.

AL 127

chapter 4 - honouring the body

The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

He who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price.

So glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 6:13.17-20

At the heart of the Church's teaching on sexual ethics is the belief that our innate human dignity embraces also our bodies. Our dignity is not dependent on whether we are old or young, disabled or incapacitated, unborn or in the fullness of life, beautiful or otherwise. By being incarnate we have the dignity of being made in the image of the 'Word made flesh' and we have the prospect of eternal life before us.

This insight, born of our faith and transmitted to us through the Church, ought to form a great part in how we learn to love each other. It forms the basis of much of our teaching on life issues such as abortion and euthanasia but also on issues of social concern, and not least on the way we are bound to behave towards each other in all loving relationships.

We love the other person for who they are, not simply for their body. Although the body ages, it still expresses that personal identity that first won our heart. Even if others can no longer see the beauty of that identity, a spouse continues to see it with the eyes of love and so his or her affection does not diminish.

AL 164

This insight into our inner dignity also has important implications for how we see ourselves when we look in the mirror. We can look into the eyes that stare back at us through the glass and say to our reflection, 'Despite what you think of yourself, when God looks at you, He loves you, He delights in you because He sees His own image in yours.'

It's an uplifting and beautiful thought.

Raphael's Madonna, Sistine Chapel



“... our bodies have been given to us to communicate love, not to take refuge from love, where we take refuge from the Lord who loves us so deeply...”

From this flows all the teaching of the Church which sometimes seems so hard to accept when we think of the human body as a vessel of pleasure: masturbation, drug and alcohol abuse, trivialising our bodies and our dignity on social media: all of these and others are habits which intrinsically damage our real, supernatural dignity, and prevent us from seeing that our bodies have been given to us to communicate love, not to take refuge from love, and in doing so take refuge from the Lord who loves us so deeply:

*Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us.
Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of His body.

Ephesians 5:2.21.28-31

Lastly, flowing from this insight that the body has innate dignity, there are implications which inform the Church's teaching on sexual intercourse, whether in marriage or outside of marriage. For a married heterosexual couple, the Church teaches that the sexual expression of love is a precious, God-given means by which the spouses offer themselves to each other. God is always in the picture, wishing to bless the union of the married couple with His divine favour.

However, if the couple use sexual intercourse to express something less noble, then by degrees they fall away from the will of God. For this reason the Church considers sinful those who within marriage dishonour their spouses by using their bodies as an instrument for the purpose of self-centred sexual pleasure. If sexual intercourse is performed with such a selfish intention, then it is damaging to the marriage. The callousness of such an attitude will spread from the bedroom into the heart of the marriage, and the sexual language of misplaced desire will eventually lead to there being no room left for sexual intercourse to communicate love.

Likewise, when a married couple reject the possibility that their love could bear fruit in children, they fall away from the will of God if they do this out of self-interest, rather than for the good of family. For example, a couple who shun the possibility of having children because they'll interfere with 'career development' or their social life, is thinking sinfully.

On the other hand, a couple may well have good reasons for wanting to avoid children, for instance when parents feel unable to provide for more than a certain number of children, or when they wish to devote their time to a newborn child before opening themselves to the possibility of another. If the couple are thinking selflessly, and make the decision jointly, maturely and in good conscience, then they should feel no guilt.

But even in such circumstances, the Church encourages the couple to avoid tampering with the dignity and beauty of the sexual expression of love by artificial means. Instead of using contraceptive devices, they could learn to find other ways of expressing marital love than sexual intercourse in the few fertile days of the woman's cycle. Far from thinking of this as something negative, the couple have an opportunity to enhance their love for each other by sharing time together in a spirit of joy:

Excess, lack of control or obsession with a single form of pleasure can end up weakening and tainting that very pleasure and damaging family life.

A person can certainly channel his passions in a beautiful and healthy way, increasingly pointing them towards altruism and an integrated self-fulfilment that can only enrich interpersonal relationships in the heart of the family. This does not mean renouncing moments of intense enjoyment, but rather integrating them with other moments of generous commitment, patient hope, inevitable weariness and struggle to achieve an ideal.

AL 148

We understand that it can seem difficult for many to hear the Church continuing to stand by its ageless teaching, passed down from earliest times, on the immorality of sexual expressions of love in relationships outside of marriage. We recognise that it doesn't at all accord with the attitudes prevalent in contemporary society.

This is not the only area where the Church stands out against what has now become culturally acceptable in our times, but the Church has had to tread a lonely path in every age, since those earliest of days in the history of Christianity. We are called to proclaim the truth as it has been passed down to us in and out of season, preaching what might well seem foolish and unpalatable in the eyes of the world.

Our faith calls upon us to consider marriage as the only proper state in which the sexual expression of love truly reflects its divine purpose. But thankfully, sexual intercourse is not the only way to express our devotedness, nor the only language to use as we travel through life with someone whom we love.

Lastly, almost as a crowning observation on the subject, we return to what was said at the beginning of this document: For us, marriage is a religious vocation. Moreover, between a baptised man and woman, marriage becomes a Sacrament, as it is well described in the opening prayer of the Catholic Rite of Marriage:

*O God, who in creating the human race
willed that man and wife should be one,
join, we pray, in a bond of inseparable love
these your servants who are to be united in the covenant of Marriage,
so that, as you make their love fruitful,
they may become, by your grace, witnesses to charity itself.*



Washing of the Feet, Giotto, Scrovegni Chapel

This prayer describes marriage as a 'covenant' where the couple become a Sacramental sign pointing to both our origin and our fulfilment: backwards to the original desire of God that 'man and wife should be one' so that their love can bear fruit, and forwards to the prospect of bearing witness to charity itself. In Christian Marriage this quality of love is raised to the level of a Sacrament, but whether or not we are married, and whatever our state in life, all of us are called to 'become witnesses to charity itself'.

All of us are called to fulfil our own God-given vocation in one way or another and grow more like the God who made us and redeemed us by His grace.

Finally, we return to what must always be in the forefront of any Catholic RSE programme: it is God who provides us with our definition of the word 'love', and by His grace we receive the means to make that definition descriptive of our feeble attempts to love as he loves:

*We have known and believe the love that God has for us.
God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.*

1 John 4:16

conclusion

Pope Francis challenges us to find 'a new and more appropriate language in introducing children and adolescents to the topic of sexuality'. It is a challenge which we take up readily, because we have to provide a counter-example to the values which often prevail in our sexualised culture, where sexual prowess and conquest is presented as a desire to be attained. The message of Christ in contrast is already written within us, and with the help of God's grace can indeed be achieved.

In our RSE programmes we shouldn't be afraid to acknowledge that our own Christian values can also seem to present a remote, unattainable ideal, but there is a great difference: our values are grounded in reality and imbued with forgiveness.

*Here is a saying that you can rely on and nobody should doubt:
that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
I myself am the greatest of them.
1 Timothy 1:15*

All of us can make those words from St. Paul to Timothy our own.

As we boldly aim to make God's definition of love our own, all of us are bound to fall short. But with every fall, we give Christ the opportunity to help us start again, and travel 'arm in arm' with us as we journey through life, as do the couple in Van Gogh's painting. We finish with the words which are used to close *Amoris Laetitia*.

*May we never lose heart because of our limitations, or ever stop seeking that fullness
of love and communion which God holds out before us.
AL 325*

***“Our values are grounded in reality and
imbued with forgiveness.”***

further reading

In addition to the 'Catechism of the Catholic Church', there follows a selection of resources for further reference:

introduction

On the importance of RSE:

Bl. Pope Paul VI, *Gravissimum Educationis* 1.

The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educational Guidance in Human Love* 12, 34-35.

The Pontifical Council for the Family, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*.

On the need to have a positive presentation of the church's teaching on sex

Pope Benedict XVI, *Interview Of The Holy Father Benedict XVI In Preparation For The Upcoming Journey To Bavaria* 2006.

On the dignity of the human person:

Saint Pope John Paul II (JPII), *Evangelium Vitae* 2.

JPII *Letter to Families* 1994 - *Gratissimam Sane* 6.

incomplete identity

On the mystery of man:

Gaudium et Spes (GS) 22,24.

JPII, *Familiaris Consortio* (FC) 11.

On marriage as a vocation:

Bl. Pope Paul VI *Humane Vitae* 8.

THMS 26-30.

On fostering the nobility of marriage and the family:

Gaudium et Spes 47-52.

On the communion of love in marriage:

Familiaris Consortio 18-21.

On marriage and family:

JPII *Letter to Families* 7-10.

On children in the family:

Gaudium et Spes 50.

On love involving the whole person:
Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* 5.

On family as the first place of education in prayer:
JPII *Letter to Families* 4.

the language of Desire

On language of love:
Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*

On love and generosity:
The Pontifical Council for the Family, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality* 9.

On patience and chastity:
Evangelium Vitae 97.

On education in chastity:
The Pontifical Council for the Family, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality* 58.

honouring the body

On dignity of the human body:
JPII, *General Audience (16 January 1980)*
Gaudium et Spes 14.
Evangelium Vitae 2.

On homosexuality:
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*

On principles behind social media damage and pornography:
JPII *Letter to Families* 20.

*Love is patient and kind;
love is not jealous or boastful;
it is not arrogant or rude.*

*Love does not insist on its own way;
it is not irritable or resentful;
it does not rejoice at wrong,
but rejoices in the right.*

*Love bears all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things,
endures all things.*

Love never ends.

1 Corinthians 13: 4-8



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