

WHOLE SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

1 Introduction

New Hall, a Catholic boarding and day School, provides **the best start in life**, enabling students to meet confidently the challenges of the wider world.

Here **academic excellence** is achieved in surroundings where relationships are based on **care, trust and respect**.

We **welcome** students from many traditions, building a Christian **community** that has at its heart **prayer** and **service** to others.

Educating our students in this sensitive area is an important part of enabling them to meet confidently the personal relationship challenges that they will encounter in the wider world.

We take as our guide the teachings of the Church and its ideals about love:

"Loving another person involves the joy of contemplating and appreciating their innate beauty and sacredness, which is greater than my needs." Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 2016

Our presentation of Church teaching, in particular, is always a positive one. For we are mindful of Pope Benedict XVI's counsel in 2006:

"Christianity, Catholicism, isn't a collection of prohibitions: it's a positive option."

As Jesus proclaimed,

"I have come that you might have life and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

In this spirit, the provision of RSE is carefully planned to ensure that as well as meeting all the statutory requirements it also fully meets diocesan requirements, is firmly rooted in the teaching of the Church and celebrates a holistic vision of the human person. As a consequence, students are able to confidently articulate what they have learned in these lessons.

As a Catholic School, the *RSE Policy* at New Hall has its basis in the following core principles:

- We want our students to understand that each life has a purpose, and is a gift, and to value themselves because they are made in the image and likeness of God; as part of this, our students must learn to value themselves in the formation of good personal relationships and friendships
- Our students should know how to protect themselves from emotional and physical harm, including in their relationships with others, and other risks such as FGM, grooming, online exploitation
- We wish for our students to respect and love each other, as children of God, and to practise care, trust and respect
- We seek to foster in our students an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church and the place of human sexuality in living life to the full
- We are created to live as part of a community - local, national and global - and our students should understand how to respect those with different beliefs, lifestyles and preferences to

their own

Stemming from our vision of what it means to be human, we seek to educate the whole person: spiritually, intellectually, morally, emotionally, psychologically and physically towards Christian maturity. We recognise that education in relationships and sex forms an important part of safeguarding and promoting fundamental British values. RSE has cross-curricular links with Theology, PSHEE and Science.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 Preparatory Divisions

- To encourage pupils' growth in self-respect, acknowledging that we are all created in the likeness of God
- To explore the meaning and value of life and give some appreciation of the values of family life
- To help pupils develop an understanding that love is the central basis of relationships
- To offer sex education in the wider context of relationships
- To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty and have some understanding of the physical and emotional changes they will experience
- To help pupils develop a healthy and safe lifestyle
- To encourage pupils to reflect on their relationships and recognise the qualities that help relationships to grow and develop positively
- To encourage pupils to be aware of their attitudes and values and have a sense of responsibility for themselves; this includes an awareness of what it means to live as a British citizen
- To have some understanding of and to consider sensitively the beliefs, values and cultures of others and respect differences between people
- To provide a forum where pupils can share their concerns and offer a climate of support where they know they will be listened to sensitively
- To explain the process of human procreation
- To enable pupils to recognise the importance of the choices they make and that they are responsible for the decisions they take
- To keep parents informed of the purpose and content of the programme, to involve parents at every stage in the delivery of the programme, and to consult parents at the outset, seeking their support for the programme
- To prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom of God

2.2 Senior Divisions

- To engender growth in self-respect and worth, recognising that each of us is created in the image of God
- To explore the meaning and value of life and give some appreciation of the values of family life
- To enable students to have some understanding that love is central and the basis of meaningful relationships. To clarify the importance of consent, boundaries and safety by following the rule of law with regards to relationships and sex
- To enable students to have some understanding of themselves, their own bodies, their emotional development, as they grow and change and have awareness of puberty and

fertility

- To encourage students to reflect on their relationships and recognise the qualities that help relationships to grow and develop positively
- To encourage students to be aware of their attitudes and values and have a sense of responsibility for themselves; this includes an awareness of what it means to live as a British Citizen
- To promote respect for others, giving particular attention to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation. The School is committed to upholding the Equality Act 2010 across all its operations
- To develop a sense of mutual respect and sensitive consideration to the beliefs, values and cultures of others with regards to relationships and sex
- To provide a forum where students can share their concerns and offer a climate of support where they know they will be listened to sensitively
- To explain the process of human procreation
- To enable students to recognise the importance of the choices they make and that they are responsible for the decisions they take
- To help with careful consideration of family planning
- To help students resist peer, social and media pressures
- To help students develop their critical faculties and be aware of the values conveyed by the media in relation to self-image and sexuality
- To provide education on birth control, HIV, AIDS, other sexually transmitted infections, abortion and sexual abuse

3 Delivery

3.1 Preparatory Divisions

In the Preparatory Divisions, RSE is covered through PSHEE, Science and Religious Education lessons, using the faith-based scheme of work '*Life to the Full*' provided by TenTen. At the core of the programme is a Christian faith understanding that our deepest identity is as a child of God – created chosen and loved by God. The programme is inclusive of all pupils and their families. It recognises that human sexuality is a gift from God and it is concerned with the spiritual and moral, as well as the physical and social.

The explicit teaching of the '*Life to the Full*' programme is a two-year cycle, which is taught across the Preparatory Divisions over the second half of the Trinity Term.

We also recognise that every area of School life can potentially contribute to education in personal relationships as the School, by its very nature, operates through positive human relationships. Lessons are followed up with '*Circle Time*' and a '*Worry Box*', so pupils have an opportunity to raise any questions or concerns anonymously.

By the end of the Pre-Prep Division, pupils should be able to:

- understand the importance of valuing themselves and others
- recognise their membership of the family and the roles within it
- understand growth and know themselves as males and females
- be able to name the main external parts of the body (including genitalia)

- recognise that babies have specific needs
- appreciate relationships, friends, family, working and playing together
- know about rituals that mark life, death, birth, marriage etc
- recognise a range of emotions and how we deal with them
- know about being safe
- know the differences between good and bad touching
- appreciate that some diseases are infectious
- have an awareness of personal health and safety and personal hygiene

By the end of the Preparatory Division, pupils should be able to:

- value themselves as children of God and recognise that their bodies are a gift from God
- understand that they grow and change throughout life
- understand what is meant by relationships within families, friends and communities
- develop an appreciation of what is involved in bringing up children and what responsibilities parents have
- become aware of the different patterns of friendship
- be aware of their changing emotions and the need to respect other people's emotions and feelings
- begin to know and understand the changes that come about through puberty
- know and understand their own bodies and the need for personal hygiene
- know the scientific names of external and internal parts of the body (including the reproductive system)
- know the basic biology of human reproduction
- become aware of choices they make and that there are good and wrong choices
- recognise the importance of forgiveness in relationships

3.2 Senior Divisions

In the Senior Divisions, RSE is taught in a cross-curricular way through Science, Theology and PSHEE lessons, via the Assistant Principal, teachers, tutors and external speakers.

The diverse staffing and the variety of experience contained within this teaching body is seen as a valuable resource for the delivery of Relationships and Sex Education. The provision of RSE is seen as progressive in terms of language, concepts and content, which increases in depth and complexity as students progress through the School.

In the attempt to enable students to acquire knowledge, skills, responsible attitudes and behaviour with regard to relationships and sex, New Hall aims to provide a worthwhile educational experience for all its students, which will present opportunities:

- to help students to consider the importance of self-autonomy, dignity, respect for themselves and for others, acceptance of responsibility, sensitivity towards the needs and views of others
- to enable students to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks, of certain types of behaviours and to accept that both sex partners should behave responsibly and consensually in sexual matters
- to support the personal development and social skills of the students

- to ensure that students have an understanding and respect for their own and others' sexuality, gender and autonomy
- to enjoy relationships based upon mutual respect and responsibility which are free from abuse and exploitation
- to provide information and knowledge which will counteract prejudice and ignorance
- to develop an understanding of risk and to promote strategies for personal safety
- to enable students to access information and support, in times of confusion or difficulty

3.2.1 Main Topics – KS3

- The wonder of creation
- Human worth and dignity
- Healthy relationships and family life
- Reproductive Health
- The biology of the male and female reproductive system
- Sexuality and consent
- Online safety
- Bullying including cyber bullying
- Harassment
- Responsible use of social media

3.2.2 Main Topics - KS4/KS5

- Respectful relationships and sexual health
- The nature of families
- Sexuality, consent and being safe
- Contraception and natural family planning
- Reproductive and sexual health
- Human rights and British values
- Discrimination

4 The role of parents

“The Church has always recognised that it is the privilege and the responsibility of parents to educate and inform their children in all matters pertaining to personal growth and development, particularly in the sensitive area of their moral and sexual development. The Church also recognises that many parents require help and support in this task from both schools and parishes.” (Bishops’ Conference 1994)

The School fully subscribes to the views expressed by the Bishops’ Conference as laid out above.

In the Preparatory Divisions, a RSE information evening is held at the beginning of the Trinity Term, to inform Years 4, 5 and 6 parents as to the detailed content of the ‘Journey in Love’ programme. In the Senior Divisions, parents are invited to engage with the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum via Firefly and parental consultation is actively encouraged. Feedback informs preparation and delivery of schemes of work.

5 Parental right of withdrawal

Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Statutory Guidance (2021) gives parents the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of Sex Education delivered as part

of statutory RSE. Once 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.

The School will automatically grant a request to withdraw a student from any Sex Education delivered in the Preparatory Divisions, other than as part of the science curriculum.

If a student is excused from Sex Education, the School will ensure that the student receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. It is our hope that parents would wish students to be involved in the School's full programme.

6 Monitoring and review

6.1 Assessment and recording

Teachers assess and monitor students' development of knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes via baseline, formative and summative assessment. Students assess their level of confidence and knowledge against learning outcomes prior to and following their learning, which ensures that learning objectives are relevant and appropriate to meet the needs of the group. Assessment allows students and teachers alike to identify areas of the curriculum for further development.

6.2 Monitoring and review

The Assistant Principal is responsible for monitoring the quality of RSE teaching. A regular process of review and development of the RSE programme is completed as part of the annual cycle of School improvement. This is carried out mainly through observation and feedback is offered to both staff and external providers. Colleagues are supported in the teaching of RSE, by giving them information about current developments in the subject and by providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the School.

The *RSE Policy* will be reviewed as part of the New Hall School policy review cycle and in the light of national and local changes. Consultation and associated feedback with staff, students and parents will inform the future development of this policy. A copy of this policy is made available to all parents in both the Preparatory and Senior Divisions.