



St Michaels

**Whole School
Relationships Education,
Relationships and Sex
Education (RSE) and Health
Education Policy**

September 2026

Achieve in faith with Love as a Community

1. Rationale and Ethos

'I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL' (Jn.10.10)

We are involved in relationships and sex education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals. At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity; Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God, gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity. RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops. Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE (and the Welsh Assembly Government) RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

All RSE will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

In this policy the Governors and teachers, in partnership with pupils and their parents, set out their intentions about relationships and sex education (RSE). We set out our rationale for, and approach to relationships and sex education in the school. This policy covers our school's approach to developing the whole child by putting spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development at the heart of learning. It was produced by the Assistant Headteachers (Personal Development) through consultation with parents and Governors. We define relationships and sex education as 'the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health'. We acknowledge that 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. In fulfilling our statutory duty to provide a full programme of health, relationships, and sex education, we recognise our roles in preparing students to make informed choices. We believe that this means we must provide our students with the most up-to-date education available

2. Values and Virtues

Our programme enshrines Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage, and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to the God's call to love others with a proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body.

Statutory Guidance

From September 2020 Relationship Education is compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. Health Education is compulsory in all schools; both primary and secondary. (There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. This does not apply to academies). The parental right to withdraw pupils from RSE remains in primary and secondary education, for aspects of sex education which are not part of the science curriculum. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education from 2020

3. Sex and Relationships Education

Sex education refers to the fact that *"pupils should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way"* Gove.uk, 2026

Relationship education *"focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks of healthy, respectful, and safe relationships—covering families, friendships, and interactions with peers and adults, both in-person and online"* Gov.uk, 2026

From September 2025 the Department for Education had made changes to the curriculum for Sex and Relationships education. These changes are compulsory across all secondary schools. Under the statutory guidance topics that should have been covered by the end of secondary school included:

- **Families**
 - Include same-sex parents/carers when discussing families.
- **Respectful relationships including, friendships, including new content:**
 - The links between sexism and misogyny and violence against women and girls.
 - Gender reassignment.
 - Teach pupils the "facts and the law" about biological sex and gender reassignment, including that legal rights may differ based on biological sex.
 - Teach pupils the "facts and the law" about biological sex and gender reassignment,
 - The role of consent, and awareness of power dynamics.
- **Online safety and awareness, including new content:**
 - That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons.
 - Pornography and how it influences attitudes and behaviours.
 - How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours
 - How sub-cultures such as 'incels' might influence our understanding of sexual ethics.
 - The prevalence of AI-generated sexual imagery and 'deepfakes'.
- **Being safe**
- **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

- Equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationship
- How identify and learn from positive male role models.
- Ethical behaviour in relationships, beyond respecting boundaries and consent.

As part of the statutory guidance it states that it is also important that pupils are aware of the law surrounding sex and relationships as well as broader safeguarding issues. This extends to consent, violence and abuse, online behaviours including image and information sharing, pornography, sexuality, extremism/radicalisation, hate crime, criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drug operations), hate crime and female genital mutilation (FGM).

4. Safe and effective practice including safeguarding

We will ensure a safe learning environment for all pupils by ensuring teachers adhere to the guidelines set out in our behaviour policy. Pupils will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the various topics covered in class and any queries will be answered in line with the aims set out in this policy. Sensitive issues will be handled with the upmost care and in line with the ethos of the school.

Teachers are aware that effective sex and relationship education which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationships, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. All staff are fully aware of the schools procedure for dealing with a disclosure as outlined in the safeguarding policy and will refer any such issues to the designated safeguarding lead.

Any visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of sex and relationship education will also be subject to the schools safeguarding guidelines and will be subjected to all reasonable vetting procedures and Disclosure Barring Service checks.

5. The right to withdraw pupils from Sex Education (Years 6-13)

Under the new guidelines for September 2020 the Department of Education has put in place new guidance on the right to withdraw from sex education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from any of the sex education aspects of the PSHE programme. Any request to withdraw from sex education must be put in writing and addressed to the head teacher for consideration.

Pupils cannot be withdrawn from any of the relationship or health aspects of education as this is seen as an important part of the curriculum and all pupils should be given access to topics surrounding staying safe and healthy relationships etc. The science curriculum contains topics on human development including reproduction which there is no right to withdraw from.

Pupils will also have the right to opt back in to sex education without their parents' consent from three school terms before their sixteenth birthday if they would like to. The school has an obligation to provide sex education for any pupils this may affect. This change has been reflected in the planning of the school's PSHE curriculum. For more information on the finer details of curriculum content please refer to the school website where the curriculum for PSHE is published under the curriculum tab.

6. Primary curriculum overview

In the Primary Phase, we choose to teach a small series of lessons on Sex Education in Year 6 which are optional. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons and can do so in writing to the Primary Phase Headteacher. Our Sex Education lessons are called 'Making Babies' which answers the question: 'Where do babies come from?'

Within our scheme, Ten:Ten Life to the Full Plus, parents have access to the lessons and resources used and can view these prior to the lessons taught. If you would like access to this, please contact your child's class teacher or our Primary Phase PSHE Lead.

Parents will be given at least two weeks notice prior the teaching of these lessons to allow time for any withdrawals and any conversations that parents feel their child would benefit from at home.

7. Secondary curriculum overview

Before the delivery of RSE, school write to parents sharing the TenTen curriculum that we use for delivery of RSE. Parents have access to the full curriculum, including the lesson titles and learning objectives. From the sharing of these curricula, parents can make informed decisions as to whether they wish to withdraw their children from all or part of RSE. Parents cannot withdraw pupils from any of the relationship or health aspects of education.

8. Teaching and Learning

How delivery and content will be made accessible to all pupils including SEND

Every lesson across the curriculum is planned and delivered to ensure that the content is accessible for all pupils. This includes choosing appropriate language, resources and teaching styles. Lessons will be planned, resourced and taught with every pupil in mind and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that each pupil receives an education which is suited to their needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the statutory responsibility of the governing body to ensure the school has a compliant and up to date policy. The Governing Body are required to approve the policy and hold the Heads of School to account for its implementation.

The Heads of School are responsible for ensuring PSHE is taught consistently across the school and for managing requests with regards to the parental right to withdraw from non-statutory Sex Education.

The PSHE Leads are responsible for leading and managing the PSHE curriculum including RSE which includes statutory Relationships Education and Health Education.

Teachers are responsible for delivering RSE lessons.

RSE Monitoring

PSHE leads monitor the delivery of RSE termly and evaluates the programme annually.

Written and Reviewed

Written July 2026: Vicki Boyd, Michael Trigg and Dani Collins

To be reviewed: July 2027