

RSE Policy

June 2016



Saint Augustine Webster
Catholic Voluntary Academy



Mission Statement

The school will aim to:

- develop an awareness of God's love and presence in individual's lives and to elicit a response to that;
- help pupils to develop a reasoned set of attitudes, values and beliefs allowing the individual to make sound and moral judgements in the light of personal commitment to the Lord, Jesus Christ;
- make prayer, worship and liturgy valued experiences;
- develop real links with home and parish;
- create caring relationships with all those children and adults who are involved in the school.

Policy on Relationship and Sex Education

1 Introduction

1.1 St. Augustine Webster's sex education policy is based on the recognition that positive, person-centred education is at the heart of Catholic Christian education. This education is basically about the development, growth and journey of the whole person towards becoming fully human and fully alive as a unique creation made in God's image.

Sex education at St. Augustine Webster School supports the personal, moral and social development of children's own and others' sexuality in positive ways, and the enjoyment of relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility; free from abuse.

Sex education is of paramount importance in our Catholic schools today. More than ever do the children in our care need help and guidance to live out their lives as members of the Christian family.

We recognise 'Relationship and Sex Education' as the policy's full title, but, for brevity's sake, we will refer in the rest of this policy simply to 'sex education'.

1.2 In the DCSF document, sex education is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development'. The guidance states, 'It is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.'

1.3 When we inform our pupils through sex education about sexual issues, we do this with regard to morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 We help children to:

- grow in self respect and self worth, recognising that each of us is created in the image of God;
- explore the meaning and value of life, and give some appreciation of the values of family life;
- develop respect for their own bodies and have some understanding that love is the basis of a committed, long term, meaningful relationship;
- understand the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults, and how humans reproduce;
- understand the importance of family life;
- ask moral questions;
- respect the views of other people;
- share their concerns if they are worried about any sexual matters.

3 Context

3.1 We teach about sex in the context of the school's Mission Statement. While sex education in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code, and of the values which underpin all our work. We teach sex education on the understanding that:

- it is taught in the context of marriage and family life;

- it is part of a wider process of social, personal, spiritual and moral education;
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity;
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect;
- children need to learn the importance of self-control.

4 Organisation

- 4.1 We teach about sex through different aspects of the curriculum. Certain elements of the programme e.g. understanding their bodies and valuing themselves, could occur in PE or Good Work Assemblies. Respect for others and valuing relationships would be part of the RE curriculum, and central to the ethos of our school.
- 4.2 The main sex education takes place through a programme named 'In the Beginning'. This was devised by a Head of a Catholic School, and is approved by our Diocese and Governing Body. The themes are taught in Y1- Y6.
- 4.3 In science lessons, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 1, we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the fact that people are not all the same, and that we need to respect each other. In Key Stage 2, we teach about life processes, and the main stages of the human life cycle, in greater depth.
- 4.4 In Year 6, we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. The school nurse works with the teachers. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how children's bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.
- 4.5 A letter or a section in the newsletter in the summer term informs parents when sex education will take place and asks them to work with the children on the information that is sent home. Y6 parents are offered the opportunity to see the film the school uses in its teaching.

5 The role of parents and carers

- 5.1 The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents and carers of children at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective, we:
- inform parents and carers about the school's sex education policy and practice;
 - answer any questions that parents or carers may have about the sex education of their child;
 - take seriously any issue that parents or carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for sex education in the school;
 - encourage parents and carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary;
 - inform parents and carers about the best practice known with regard to sex education, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.

We believe that through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

- 5.2 Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents/carers in this regard.

6 The role of other members of the community

- 6.1 We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our sex education programme.

7 Confidentiality

- 7.1 Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will not try to investigate, but will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns. The headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals (see also our policy on Child Protection).

8 The role of the headteacher

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents/carers are informed about our sex education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach about sex effectively, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- 8.2 The headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school sex education programme, and ensures that all adults who work with our children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and work within its framework.
- 8.3 The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis, and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 The Curriculum Committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of our sex education policy on an annual basis. This committee will report its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee will give serious consideration to any comments from parents and carers about the sex education programme, and make a record of all such comments.
- 9.2 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.

10 The Programme

- 10.1 A copy of the Sex Education Scheme 'In the Beginning' is available for parents to view.