

Thomas More Catholic School



Mission Statement

To Care for, respect and value all people and our environment.

To Learn that justice and love are the foundations of our Faith.

To make these the guiding principles of our community in its commitment to academic excellence and personal integrity.

To Achieve beyond our highest expectations, creating challenging opportunities, which take us all confidently through the 21st Century.

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

KS3 and KS4

Date Reviewed	19th October 2017
Review Confirmed by	Chair, Curriculum Committee
Date Approved by Full Board	28th March 2017
Next Review Due	Autumn Term 2018

Introduction

The teaching of all aspects of the curriculum in TMCS reflects our Catholic / Christian ethos. In the same way, Relationship Education at TMCS schools is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the profound respect for the dignity of all human persons. Children need to have an age appropriate understanding of the human body and such knowledge does not deprive a child of his or her innocence.

The term **Relationship Education** is used in this policy rather than 'Sex and Relationship Education'. Our approach goes beyond provision of biological information and focuses on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

At Thomas More Catholic School, this means children learning about their uniqueness as part of God's creation, God's love for each person, and how this means we must respect one another. This helps children to establish friendships and it contributes to child protection.

TMCS Governors and staff are committed to ensure that our students grow up knowing and understanding the Church's teachings, and with the factual information and skills that they need for their own health and wellbeing, free of exploitation and leading to fulfilled lives, which for many will include the joy of loving married relationships

In December 2009, Oona Stannard Chief Executive & Director of the Catholic Education Service, wrote, 'Setting the Record Straight':

'The Catholic Education Service for England and Wales (CESEW) generally supports Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) within Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education where this is appropriate to the needs of the children and young people and will help them to develop healthy lifestyles and respect for the sanctity of life.'

Our expectation is that good SRE is life affirming and that it should assist in reducing the number of teenage pregnancies and abortions. It can do this by helping to develop young peoples' self-esteem and belief in the value of married life alongside the behaviours necessary to resist pressures for early sexual activity and sexual relationships outside marriage. In all these matters it will be essential that pupils in our schools develop in knowledge and understanding of the teachings of the Church.

*Knowing **about** facts is not the same as promoting particular behaviours. To keep our young people ignorant about facts e.g. to prevent an age appropriate understanding of contraception and its risks or to hide the negative consequences of abortion, does not help to reduce teenage pregnancies; better that such learning take place in the context of the Church's teaching rather than risk that young people be ill informed by peers, value-free advertising or the media.*

Young people experience a great deal of pressure from these sources but a well-informed conscience and details of relevant biological and other facts can help to keep the young person safe, resisting behaviour into which they may otherwise be coerced. Not only can “learning about” help children and young people to make the right decisions for themselves, it can also help them to be a force for good with their friends and peers.’

This policy has also been informed by-

- DFEE Sex and Relationship Education guidance 2000.
- PHSE Association Guidance ‘Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) for the 21st Century.
- Education Commission (Catholic Diocese of Southwark) Diocesan Policy for Relationship and Sex Education 2016.
- DFEE PSHE guidance 2013.
- National Curriculum Science.
- Catholic Bishops Directory for Religious Education.

Policy Outline

How is Relationship Education planned and delivered?

Relationship Education is principally taught through PSHE, RE and Science lessons, other aspects or themes in Relationship Education may be taught across the curriculum for example in English Literature, History and Drama. There may also be various learning opportunities provided outside of planned lesson time e.g. workshops / training from external provider.

The Relationship Education programme will help develop students understanding that:

- Relationships affect everything we do in our lives and that relationship skills have to be learnt and practised.
- People have multiple roles and responsibilities in society and that making positive relationships and contributing to groups, teams and communities is important.
- Relationships can cause strong feelings and emotions.
- Identity is affected by a range of factors, including a positive sense of self.
- Healthy lifestyles, and the wellbeing of self and others, depend on information and making responsible choices
- Our physical, mental, sexual and emotional health affect our ability to lead fulfilling lives and that there is help and support available when they are threatened.
- Dealing with growth and change as normal parts of growing up.
- Individuals need to manage risk to themselves and others in a range of personal and social situations

- In our communities, there are similarities as well as differences between people of different race, religion, culture, ability or disability, gender, trans-gender, age or sexual orientation.

The Relationship Education programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as students mature this means balancing factual knowledge with church teachings and delivering them in an age appropriate manner. (Appendix 2)

What extra provision will be made for children with particular needs?

- All resources are used to create an inclusive and open classroom.
- Activities for students with different Learning Styles are incorporated into lesson plans.
- Liaison with the SENCo will inform any special requirements (Sensory or other), with YLs and Tutors to keep abreast of changes in students' circumstances e.g. bereavement. Time after school is offered to students for support and counselling.
- Teaching Assistants are deployed to work one-to-one with Special Needs Students.
- Parents are informed of lesson content so they can address issues if they want to.
- Seating plans are informed by SEN information and deployed to encourage well matched groups for discussion.
- More vulnerable students are observed during lessons. Sensitivity is used around them during questioning and group tasks. Child Protection Lead is informed of any issues.

Relationship Education Resources

Resources are selected and approved by the PSHE / RE / Science coordinator in consultation with SLT and Governors where applicable.

Resources present positive images and reflect the values that TMCS wishes to promote and in line with diocesan guidance. They:

- provide breadth and balance
- are factually accurate and up-to-date
- are free from stereotyping and bias in terms of gender, race, class, sexual orientation, ability and disability

Any resources that we use are evaluated before being purchased. (Appendix 1)

Confidentiality

This is applicable for all staff at TMCS

- Confidentiality, regarding Child Protection and other matters, for young people cannot and must not be guaranteed by school staff. Guidance for staff is outlined in TMCS Confidentiality policy/ Child Protection Policy.
- The boundaries of confidentiality are made clear to children and young people. If a student discloses information which is sensitive, not generally known, and which the student asks not to be passed on, the request should be honoured unless this is unavoidable for teachers to fulfil their professional responsibilities in relation to:
- Safeguarding (It is the responsibility of every member of staff to know and abide by TMCS's child protection procedures. If any member of staff has a concern about the safety of a student this must be recorded and passed on to the CPO. To do nothing is not an option!)
- Co-operating with a police investigation
- Referral to external services

Every effort should be made to secure the student's agreement to the way in which TMCS intends to use any sensitive information.

Any issues regarding safeguarding are referred to the HT, CPO or SENCO.

Answering difficult questions

Teaching staff

- Teachers must be careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of Relationship Education.
- To this end, ground rules need to have been agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach.
- There must also be clear parameters as to what will be taught in a whole class setting and what will be dealt with on an individual basis.
- Using distancing techniques provides a valuable tool for discussing sensitive issues, avoiding personal issues.

Students

- Where necessary students will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Dealing with Sensitive Questions

- Teachers should establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting.
- Teachers should set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that students discuss issues in a way which does not encourage giggling and silliness.
- Students may be offered the opportunity to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box; the teacher will choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate.
- If a verbal question is too personal the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules.
- If a question is too explicit, feels inappropriate for a student, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis.
- Teachers should not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child.

If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of abuse the Head teacher should be informed and the usual safeguarding procedures followed.

Working with outside agencies

At TMCS all community based agencies that visit to provide **curriculum support**, are issued with the following guidance:

- Be willing to share their experiences, beliefs and insights, but avoid criticising the experiences and insights of others and imposing their views upon children/young people in any way.
- Be familiar with TMCS's aims, ethos and policies and in particular the need to be aware of the teachings of the Catholic Church and plan their involvement accordingly.
- Seek to use engaging teaching and learning methods which involve the children/young people actively and communicate at appropriate levels for the age group concerned.
- Make clear to children/young people who they are, who they represent and what their aim and objectives are.
- Communicate with children/young people using an open and non-judgemental approach, avoiding any hidden agenda to influence.

Prior to agencies attending TMCS, relevant staff ensure that:

- checks have been made with the LA if there are any concerns
- their input is integrated within a planned programme
- appropriate planning sheets/lesson plans have been produced
- school/class background information has been issued
- resources have been checked for suitability
- confirmation of dates and times have been confirmed in writing
- an evaluation process has been agreed

Parents' right to withdraw their children

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of Relationship Education provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (e.g. Science). If parents wish to withdraw their child from aspects of Relationship Education, not in the Statutory National Curriculum, parents must make an appointment to speak to either the PSHE education coordinator or Head teacher. If concerns still exist and are not part of the national curriculum, then alternative arrangements will be made.

Appendix 1 – Questions to ask when selecting resources

Good practice principles

- Are the underpinning values and beliefs stated and are they consistent with those of TMCS?
- Is there guidance on identifying students' existing levels of knowledge and understanding and how to incorporate these into planning?
- Do activities cover a range of teaching and learning styles?
- Is there guidance on evaluating activities?
- Are the materials free from stereotypes?
- Do the materials take account of religious, cultural and physical diversity and special educational needs?
- Has the material been developed in consultation with students and teachers and has effectiveness been evaluated?
- Does the material include guidance on the knowledge and skills needed for effective delivery and help build teacher confidence?

Teaching and learning

- Does the material outline processes for establishing a positive and supportive learning environment e.g. developing ground rules?
- Is active learning promoted?
- Are discussion and reflection encouraged?
- Do the activities cover the development of knowledge, skills and attributes?
- Is the content differentiated and can it be adapted for use with particular groups of students?
- Is guidance given on assessing learning outcomes?

Content

- Does the content covered meet with students' needs?
- Is the content factually accurate and balanced?
- Are learning outcomes clearly stated?
- Are learning outcomes sufficiently challenging?
- Is the content appropriate to the needs of students in terms of language, images, attitude, maturity, understanding and knowledge required?
- Does it include positive images of a range of people and will the imagery and language appeal to students?
- Do the activities encourage students to think about their attitudes and values and take account of a range of perspectives?
- Do the activities encourage students to reflect on their learning and apply it to situations in their own lives?
- Does the resource support continuity and progression across key stages and curriculum subjects?
- Can the materials be adapted to differing curriculum models and school timetables?

Appendix 2 - Relationships Education Programme

Examples of content by curriculum area

Year	Theme	Learning objectives	Curriculum area
7	The spiritual side of sex and relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss whether sex is simply a physical act or is 'the soul' involved ▪ Learn sex is a gift from God, designed for marriage. ▪ Think Is God pleased with all relationships? 	RE
7	Behaviour in relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding attitudes that can affect relationships in a positive or negative way. 	PSHE
8	Behaviour in relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify behaviour that is healthy / unhealthy in relationships. 	PSHE
8	Changes in the body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How we are all created in the image of God as male and females ▪ Learning about their uniqueness as part of God's creation ▪ Puberty is beautiful and enables us to be life-giving 	RE
9	Behaviour in relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify behaviour that is healthy / unhealthy in relationships and the factors that may affect this. 	PSHE
9/10	Abortion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand that abortion is against the Catholic belief of the sanctity of life ▪ Know different types of procedures and the law 	RE
9/10/11	Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our body is a temple ▪ Discuss the dignity of all human persons and respect for one another ▪ Catholic teaching is that sex should only take place in a loving marriage ▪ Discuss when we should start a sexual relationship 	RE

9/10/11	Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding of the different and alternative types of relationships 	RE PSHE
10/11	Delaying Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the physical and mental implications of sexual relationships ▪ Strategies for resisting peer pressure. 	RE PSHE
10/11	Is commitment important in relationships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Think about marriage and stable relationships. ▪ Discuss marriage and other partnership ceremonies ▪ Look at the significance of commitment vows. 	RE
10/11	Marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marriage should be exclusive, permanent, life-giving and is a Sacrament ▪ Discuss annulment and divorce ▪ Awareness that marriage in England and Wales extends to same sex couples. 	RE
10/11	STI's and Contraception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know about different types of STI's and their consequences ▪ Understand the different methods of contraception available to people in sexual relationships and the effectiveness and suitability of different forms of contraception. 	PSHE
10/11	Contraception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Catholic Church disallows all contraceptives apart from the rhythm method ▪ Discuss how this may be difficult for some 	RE
11	Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand factors that contribute towards teenage pregnancy and the implications of early pregnancy 	PSHE
10/11	Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The realities of parenting ▪ Skills / Qualities needed to be a good parent 	RE PSHE

11	Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What factors contribute towards success in relationships▪ What characterises a successful relationship▪ What puts pressure on relationships?▪ The impact / consequences of pressure on relationships	PSHE
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