



Archdiocese of
Liverpool

Relationship, Sex and Health Education Policy (RSHE)

St Mary and St John Catholic Primary School



"In the light of Jesus we learn to shine."

Chair of Governors	Mrs A. Whitney
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1. Mission and Catholic rationale

At St Mary and St John Catholic Primary School, it is our mission to help each other to see Jesus as the true guide on our journey so that our "light" reflects his love for us. We live out our mission in all that we do and strive to shine in Jesus' light.

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

We provide Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) because of our Christian beliefs about God and the human person. Every person is created in the image of God and has unique dignity. RSHE therefore supports the spiritual, moral, social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of every pupil.

All RSHE is delivered in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church. It presents marriage and family life positively, recognises that pupils live in a variety of family circumstances, and requires every pupil and family to be treated with dignity, compassion and respect. Statutory factual and legal content is taught accurately, sensitively and in an age-appropriate way.

2. Purpose and aims

This policy explains how the school meets the revised Department for Education statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, effective from 1 September 2026, while having regard to current Catholic Education Service and diocesan guidance.

The school aims to:

- provide a safe framework in which sensitive questions and discussions can take place;
- help pupils develop dignity, self-worth, self-respect, empathy, resilience and healthy boundaries;
- teach the knowledge and skills needed for safe, respectful and kind relationships, both in person and online;
- prepare pupils for growth, puberty and menstruation and teach correct anatomical vocabulary;
- promote physical and mental wellbeing, healthy lifestyles and help-seeking;
- help pupils recognise risk, abuse, harmful behaviour and unsafe situations and know how to report concerns;
- support parents and carers as the primary educators of their children; and
- ensure learning is inclusive, accessible, carefully sequenced and consistent with Catholic teaching.

3. Statutory requirements and guidance

Relationships Education is compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. Health Education is compulsory in state-funded schools. The school has regard to the Department for Education's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance (July 2025), which applies from 1 September 2026, and to the Equality Act 2010, Keeping Children Safe in Education, the SEND Code of Practice and relevant national curriculum requirements.

Primary sex education beyond the science curriculum is not compulsory. The school nevertheless provides a carefully planned, age-appropriate programme in Years 5 and/or 6 about human reproduction, conception and birth within a Catholic understanding of love, marriage and family life. Parents are consulted about this content and may request withdrawal from this non-statutory element.

4. Policy development and review

This policy is developed through proactive engagement with staff, governors, parents and carers, and meaningful pupil voice. Consultation explains the statutory and non-statutory elements, the content and sequence, the resources used, and how parents can view materials. The governing body approves the policy. It is published on the school website, provided free of charge on request, reviewed annually and revised sooner where guidance, safeguarding needs or the curriculum change.

5. Curriculum intent, organisation and sequencing

RSHE is taught through a planned and progressive programme, discretely and across PSHE, Religious Education, science, computing, physical education and design and technology. Resources may include Journey in Love, Life to the Full, NSPCC materials, No Outsiders and PSHE Association materials, but staff remain responsible for checking that every resource is accurate, age-appropriate, accessible, consistent with this policy and mapped to the statutory content.

Appendix 1 maps the statutory content to indicative year-group phases. Teachers use the school's detailed scheme of work to identify exactly when content is introduced, revisited and deepened. Teaching takes place before pupils are likely to encounter the relevant experience or risk. Puberty and menstruation are taught early enough to prepare pupils, recognising that menstruation can begin from age eight.

The curriculum is organised under the 2026 statutory headings:

- Relationships Education: Families and people who care for me; Caring friendships; Respectful, kind relationships; Online safety and awareness; Being safe.

- Health and wellbeing: General wellbeing; Wellbeing online; Physical health and fitness; Healthy eating; Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping; Health protection and prevention; Personal safety; Basic first aid; Developing bodies.

6. Teaching and learning

Teaching is factual, balanced, positive, participative and appropriate to pupils' age, maturity, faith context and lived experience. Agreed ground rules and distancing techniques support safe discussion. Staff use correct anatomical terms, including penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum and nipples, and teach that these parts are private and that pupils can express and respect boundaries.

Questions are answered honestly and sensitively within the scope of the curriculum. If a question is not suitable for whole-class discussion, the teacher will respond individually, consult the RSHE lead or designated safeguarding lead as appropriate, and inform parents where appropriate. Staff will never promise confidentiality and will follow safeguarding procedures where a question or disclosure raises concern.

External visitors may enrich provision but do not replace teaching by trained staff. The school checks their materials and approach in advance, ensures they understand safeguarding arrangements and Catholic ethos, and keeps a member of staff present.

7. Safeguarding and preventative education

RSHE is part of the school's preventative safeguarding curriculum and is aligned with the Child Protection and Safeguarding, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Online Safety policies. Pupils learn about privacy, bodily autonomy, appropriate and inappropriate contact, healthy boundaries, emotional, physical and sexual abuse, harmful or dangerous relationships, grooming and online risks. They learn that abuse is never the child's fault, how to identify trusted adults, how to report concerns and how to keep telling until they are heard.

Staff recognise that RSHE may prompt disclosures. All concerns are recorded and reported immediately in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. The designated safeguarding lead decides any further action.

8. Equality, inclusion and SEND

All pupils are entitled to accessible RSHE. Teaching positively illustrates a range of family structures, including single-parent, same-sex-parent, grandparent, kinship, adoptive and foster families, without stigmatising any child. The curriculum develops respect for difference, challenges stereotypes, prejudice, harassment and bullying, and meets the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

For pupils with SEND, staff make reasonable adjustments to vocabulary, pacing, teaching methods, resources and assessment. Content is not omitted solely because a pupil has SEND; it is revisited and presented concretely where needed so that pupils acquire knowledge and skills that reduce vulnerability and increase independence and safety.

9. Working with parents and carers; access to materials

The school recognises parents and carers as the primary educators of their children and works in partnership with them. Parents are informed in advance about the curriculum, particularly puberty and non-statutory sex education. They may view all curriculum materials on request, including materials supplied by external providers. Copyright restrictions do not prevent the school from enabling parents to view materials through an appropriate arrangement.

Where emerging needs require a material departure from the published programme, the school informs parents in advance and makes relevant materials available, unless an immediate safeguarding response is required.

10. Right to request withdrawal

Parents do not have the right to withdraw a child from statutory Relationships Education, Health Education or national curriculum science, including science content relating to puberty or reproduction.

Parents may request withdrawal from some or all non-statutory sex education taught outside science. Requests should be made in writing to the headteacher. The headteacher will meet parents, explain the nature and purpose of the curriculum and discuss possible effects of withdrawal. In a primary school, the request will be granted. The school will document the process and provide appropriate, purposeful alternative education.

11. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body approves the policy, assures itself that statutory duties are met and holds the headteacher to account. The headteacher ensures consistent implementation, trained staff, parental transparency, appropriate resources and proper handling of withdrawal requests. The RSHE lead maintains the curriculum map, supports staff, checks resources and monitors quality and progression.

Teachers deliver RSHE sensitively and in accordance with this policy, model respectful relationships, adapt teaching, assess learning and follow safeguarding procedures. Pupils are expected to participate respectfully, listen to others and follow agreed ground rules.

12. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation

Assessment identifies what pupils know, understand and can do; it does not assess personal beliefs or private experiences. Teachers use baseline activities, questioning, discussion, scenarios and pupil work to check learning. The RSHE lead monitors planning, lessons, work, pupil voice, staff confidence and curriculum coverage. Findings inform staff development and curriculum review. Governors receive appropriate assurance about implementation, safeguarding and statutory coverage.

13. Resources and related policies

Resources are selected for accuracy, quality, age-appropriateness, accessibility, safeguarding value and consistency with the school's Catholic ethos. This policy should be read alongside the Child Protection and Safeguarding, Online Safety, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Equality, SEND, Science and Curriculum policies.

Appendix 1: Primary statutory RSHE content and indicative progression

This appendix reflects the statutory content to be covered by the end of primary under the framework effective from 1 September 2026. Sensitive content is adapted to pupils' developmental stage and individual needs.

Families and people who care for me

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability.	R–Y6
2. Characteristics of safe and happy family life: commitment, protection and care, spending time together and sharing one another's lives.	R–Y6
3. Other children's families may look different; these differences should be respected and families can be characterised by love and care.	Y1–Y4
4. Stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and children's security.	Y2–Y6
5. Marriage and civil partnerships are formal, legally recognised commitments intended to be lifelong.	Y4–Y6
6. How to recognise when family relationships feel unhappy or unsafe and how to seek help or advice.	R–Y6

Caring friendships

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. The importance of friendships for happiness and security, and how people choose and make friends.	R–Y6
2. Healthy friendships are positive and welcoming; skills for developing caring, kind friendships.	R–Y6
3. Not everyone has the friends they would like at all times; loneliness is common and can be talked about.	Y1–Y6
4. Characteristics of secure friendships, including respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, shared interests and support.	Y1–Y6
5. Friendships have ups and downs and can often be repaired or strengthened.	Y1–Y6
6. How to manage conflict and that violence is never right.	Y2–Y6
7. How to recognise an unhappy or uncomfortable friendship and get support.	R–Y6

Respectful, kind relationships

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Paying attention to others' needs and preferences and balancing different needs and wishes.	R–Y6
2. Setting and respecting healthy boundaries with friends, family, peers and adults.	R–Y6
3. Communicating and managing conflict with kindness and respect; assertiveness; expressing needs and boundaries; managing disappointment and frustration.	Y1–Y6
4. The difference between assertiveness and control, and between kindness and neglecting one's own needs.	Y3–Y6
5. Expecting respect and respecting people who are different or have different choices, preferences or beliefs.	R–Y6
6. Practical skills that improve and support relationships.	R–Y6

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
7. Courtesy and manners.	R–Y6
8. Self-respect, happiness, self-esteem and a strong identity developed through skills and interests.	R–Y6
9. Types and impact of bullying, including online bullying; bystander responsibility and how to get help.	Y1–Y6
10. What stereotypes are, how they can cause harm or bullying and how to challenge them.	Y2–Y6
11. How to seek help when concerned about violence or harm, or unsure whom to trust.	R–Y6

Online safety and awareness

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Respect online; face-to-face principles also apply online; resisting pressure to share information or images.	Y1–Y6
2. Critically evaluating online relationships and information; false identities; harmful content or contact and reporting it.	Y2–Y6
3. Minimum ages for social media (currently 13) and how age limits protect children.	Y3–Y6
4. Caution when sharing information; privacy and location settings.	Y2–Y6
5. Online material can circulate permanently and users lose control over where it goes.	Y3–Y6
6. Inappropriate or upsetting online content and where to get advice and support.	Y1–Y6

Being safe

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Appropriate boundaries in friendships and online, including boundaries in play and sharing space or resources.	R–Y6
2. Privacy and why unsafe secrets should not be kept.	R–Y6
3. Each person's body belongs to them; appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact.	R–Y6
4. Responding safely to adults, known and unknown, in person and online.	R–Y6
5. Recognising harmful or dangerous relationships and deciding whom to trust.	Y1–Y6
6. Reporting abuse, online concerns, real-life experiences or unsafe feelings, using confident vocabulary.	R–Y6
7. Asking for help for self or others and persisting until heard; sources of advice.	R–Y6

General wellbeing

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Benefits of physical activity, outdoor time, helping others, rest, relationships, hobbies and community participation.	R–Y6
2. Promoting general wellbeing and physical health.	R–Y6
3. The range and scale of emotions; worry and feeling down can be normal and are not themselves a mental health condition.	R–Y6
4. Recognising feelings and using varied vocabulary for one's own and others' feelings.	R–Y6

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
5. Judging whether feelings and behaviour are appropriate and proportionate.	Y2–Y6
6. Isolation and loneliness and the benefits of support.	Y1–Y6
7. Lasting effects of bullying and cyberbullying and seeking help.	Y1–Y6
8. Change, loss and bereavement; grief is natural and people grieve differently.	R–Y6
9. Where, how and when to seek support for one's own or another's wellbeing or emotional control, including online issues.	R–Y6
10. Mental health problems are common and early support can help.	Y3–Y6

Wellbeing online

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Positive and negative aspects of the internet.	R–Y6
2. How online relationships can support, but should not substitute for, high-quality in-person relationships.	Y2–Y6
3. Benefits of limiting online time and effects of devices and content on mental and physical wellbeing.	Y1–Y6
4. Effects of online behaviour on others and respectful online behaviour.	Y1–Y6
5. Why social media, apps, games, online gaming and gambling sites have age restrictions.	Y3–Y6
6. Online gaming risks, monetisation, scams, fraud, financial harms and addictive behaviour.	Y4–Y6
7. Critically evaluating content and deciding what is appropriate.	Y2–Y6
8. Online abuse, bullying and harassment and seeking trusted-adult support.	Y2–Y6
9. How online information is selected and targeted, including search results.	Y3–Y6
10. Rights relating to personal data, privacy and consent.	Y3–Y6
11. Reporting online concerns and getting support.	R–Y6

Physical health and fitness

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.	R–Y6
2. Building regular physical activity into routines.	R–Y6
3. Risks of inactivity, including obesity.	Y2–Y6
4. When and how to seek support about health.	R–Y6

Healthy eating

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. What constitutes a healthy diet, including calories and nutritional content.	Y1–Y6
2. The importance of a healthy relationship with food.	R–Y6
3. Planning and preparing healthy meals.	Y1–Y6
4. Poor diet, unhealthy eating and other behaviours and their health risks.	Y2–Y6

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Facts and risks concerning legal and illegal harmful substances, including smoking, vaping, alcohol, drugs, nicotine addiction and nicotine products such as pouches.	Y3–Y6

Health protection and prevention

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Recognising early signs of physical illness or unexplained bodily change.	Y2–Y6
2. Safe and unsafe sun exposure and reducing sun-damage risk.	R–Y6
3. Good-quality sleep, age-appropriate amounts, practical sleep habits and effects on weight, mood and learning.	R–Y6
4. Dental health: fluoride brushing twice daily, cleaning between teeth and regular dental checks.	R–Y6
5. Personal hygiene, bacteria and viruses, spread and treatment, and handwashing.	R–Y6
6. Scientific facts about vaccination and immunisation, aligned with vaccination timing.	Y2–Y6

Personal safety

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Hazards, including fire risks, that may cause harm or injury and ways to reduce risk.	R–Y6
2. Recognising risk and keeping safe near roads, railways and level crossings, and water, including the Water Safety Code.	R–Y6

Basic first aid

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Making a clear, efficient emergency-services call and reporting incidents rather than filming them.	Y1–Y6
2. Basic first aid for common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.	Y3–Y6

Developing bodies

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
1. Growth and bodily development, the human lifecycle, and puberty as a stage in that process.	R–Y6; puberty Y3–Y6
2. Correct names of body parts, including penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum and	R–Y6

Statutory content to be covered by the end of primary	Indicative progression
nipples; privacy and expressing boundaries.	
3. Menstrual cycle facts, including physical and emotional changes, taught before periods are likely to begin.	Y3–Y6

Appendix 2

Statutory Science Curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage children learn about life cycles. Through on-going personal, social and emotional development they develop the skills to form relationships and think about relationships with others.

In Key Stage 1 children learn:

- That animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and use their senses and reproduce
- To recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans
- That humans and animals can reproduce offspring and these grow into adults
- To recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others
- To treat others with sensitivity

In Key Stage 2 children learn:

- That the life processes common to humans and other animals including nutrition, growth and reproduction
- About the main stages of the human life cycle

Statutory Design Technology Curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage children learn about healthy lifestyles. Through on-going personal, social and emotional development they develop the skills to make simple healthy choices in selecting foods, to eat and they grow their own simple foods.

As part of their work with food, children learn how to cook and apply the principles of nutrition and healthy eating. Instilling a love of cooking in pupils will also open a door to one of the great expressions of human creativity. Learning how to cook is a crucial life skill that enables pupils to feed themselves and others affordably and well, now and in later life.

In Key Stage 1 children learn:

- the basic principles of a healthy and varied diet
- how to prepare simple healthy dishes
- where food comes from.

In Key stage 2 children learn:

- to understand and apply the principles of a healthy and varied diet
- how to prepare and cook a variety of predominantly savoury dishes using a range of cooking techniques
- about seasonality, and how a variety of ingredients are grown, reared, caught and processed

Statutory Computing Curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage children learn about computing through exploring a range of media. They learn about the world in a holistic way through play, story, language development etc. A key part of knowing about the world is accessed through technology.

Throughout Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils become increasingly digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

In Key Stage 1 children learn:

- How to use technology safely and respectfully,
- How to keep personal information private,
- About where to go for help and support when they have concerns about content or contact on the internet or other online technologies.

In Key Stage 2 children learn:

- How to use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly,
- To recognise acceptable/unacceptable behaviour on-line
- About a range of ways to report concerns about content and contact.

Statutory Physical Education Curriculum

Through the Statutory PE and Early Years Curriculum pupils systematically develop their understanding of the benefits of physical exercise and time spent outdoors on mental wellbeing and happiness.

Children learn:

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle
- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines
- The risks of an inactive lifestyle
- How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health