

## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

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### Framework of this policy

In delivering RSE, Blanchelande College has regard to local Guernsey law and guidelines, to the UK National Curriculum and statutory framework and also to the requirements of the Diocese of Portsmouth.

### UK National Curriculum

In accordance with the English National Curriculum, the College RSE policy is available to parents via the school website. The policy follows the National Curriculum in specifying compulsory RSE content as well as the rights of parents to withdraw their children.<sup>1</sup>

### Diocesan policies and Church teaching

The College policy also incorporates the policy and guidance issued by the Diocese of Portsmouth, including '[Human Sexuality and Personal Relationships: Guidelines for Catholic Schools on Sex and Relationships Education \(SRE\)](#)' (2015).<sup>2</sup>

As a Catholic School, RSE is taught in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church. The official form of these teachings on human sexuality can be found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Diocesan guidelines provide important commentary on these teachings and how to approach them within a school context.

### Rights of parents

Due to the distinct content of RSE and its relation to life, parents retain principal responsibility for its delivery. The College will therefore fully inform parents of its RSE curriculum. Furthermore, parents will be given the opportunity to withdraw their children from RSE lessons (with the exception of the teaching of human reproduction in Science in KS3/4). This is so that parents, as the first educators of their children, can deliver RSE themselves, within a family context. Whether or not pupils attend RSE lessons, all staff must remember that the principal responsibility for educating pupils in this area lies with parents and is only to a degree delegated by them to the school.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Philip Egan, 'Human Sexuality and Personal Relationships: Guidelines for Catholic Schools on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)': <http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/docs/20150629-BoP-Trustees-SRE-Policy-Guidelines-for-Schools.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 36; see also Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2221 and 2223.



## **Curriculum co-ordination**

RSE is taught through a number of subjects on the curriculum, principally RE, Science and PSHE, but also through other subjects, including English, art and Geography. Careful curriculum co-ordination is therefore essential for pupils to encounter topics in a coherent order, with teachers fully aware of how their contribution forms part of a wider provision. The Head of RE is tasked with liaison between departments to ensure synchronicity.

## **Responsibility of staff**

All members of staff, and particularly teachers, at the College are required to uphold the identity, ethos and mission of Blanchelande as a Catholic school.<sup>4</sup> Teachers should therefore have a sound working knowledge of the teachings of the Catholic Church, and know that they can confer with the RE department and SMT whenever they have a query. Inevitably there will be personal differences and even disagreements with some aspects of Church teaching, on the part of teachers or pupils, and these differences should be heard respectfully and considered ‘in relation to the Church’s teaching on marriage and loving relationships.’<sup>5</sup>

## **Sensitivity to pupils**

Unlike other areas of the curriculum, RSE has the potential to touch on personal issues that could cause upset or offence. All teaching of RSE in the College should express the gift of human sexuality ‘within the context of God’s unconditional love, with mercy and compassion, so that parents and students feel supported and not judged or excluded because their family for some reason does not meet the ideal type.’<sup>6</sup>

## **Guest speakers and outside agencies**

To provide specialist input, the College frequently invites guest speakers either as individuals or from outside agencies to deliver aspects of the RSE curriculum. The Principal will approve all visiting speakers prior to their invitation.<sup>7</sup> Guest speakers will be sent a copy of the College RSE policy so that they are able to shape their content appropriately. Speakers will be accompanied at all times in lessons by a member of the teaching staff.

## **Suitability of material**

Whenever the subject of human sexuality appears in lessons, delivery must be ‘age-appropriate, positive, prudent, clear and delicate... [and] should not offend against modesty [or] ... privacy.’<sup>8</sup> This means that lessons should not include inappropriate

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> ‘Human Sexuality and Personal Relationships: Guidelines for Catholic Schools on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), 4.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Human Sexuality and Personal Relationships: Guidelines for Catholic Schools on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), 5.

<sup>8</sup> ‘Human Sexuality and Personal Relationships: Guidelines for Catholic Schools on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), 5.



sexual content, either in the lesson material or in the class questions. Furthermore, teachers should lay down clear guidelines that in lessons personal details relating to sex and sexuality should be avoided. The classroom is not the appropriate space for questioning about, or sharing, personal experiences relating to sex and sexuality. Pupils should feel free to ask questions with a parent, appropriate teacher or other adult in a private context.

## **Science**

The Science curriculum includes those areas of human biology specified by the National Curriculum.<sup>9</sup> The Science department is responsible for teaching from a scientific perspective, not a moral or religious perspective. An important part of the pupils' intellectual development is a clear understanding of the differences in method and scope of each academic discipline. Where moral or religious questions do come up, Science teachers should highlight that this lies outside the scope of the scientific discipline; an appropriate member of staff from another subject discipline could be recommended. Similarly, the RE department should refer specifically scientific points to the relevant department, while informing RE teaching with a sound scientific basis. All work and discussion should be in adherence to College policy. Where topics not strictly required by the curriculum come up in lessons, for instance at the questioning of a pupil, teachers should respond sensitively and, if necessary, liaise with the RE and PSHE departments so that the question can be answered by the relevant person.

## **Religious Education**

The guidelines issued by the Diocese of Portsmouth contain a theological summary of 'Sexuality in God's Plan', which is presupposed by this document and the College's provision.

## **Personal, social and health education (PSHE)**

PSHE will seek to promote the following:

- The holistic, Christian vision of the human person, concerning human dignity and relationships.
- An understanding of and respect for human life at all stages.
- A deepening understanding of love and respect as the basis of all relationships.
- An appreciation of the nature and qualities of friendship.
- An education in the virtues, especially those of chastity and modesty.
- The importance and purpose of the sacrament of Matrimony.

In each pupil, the school will seek to develop the following attributes:

- Soundness and integrity of judgement.
- An ability to love chastely.

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 3.



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- The formation of honest and respectful relationships.
- A growth in the virtues and self-discipline.
- A healthy self-esteem and empathy for others.
- Recognition of and resilience to negative or harmful influences and values.
- A deepening capacity to reflect prayerfully on experiences.

## **Pastoral care, spiritual support and safeguarding**

RSE is important for educating pupils in how to remain happy and healthy. Human relationships and sexuality are an integral part of human maturity and for many pupils ‘the adolescent journey toward sexual maturity can be difficult and confusing, not least in today’s context’.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, every member of staff has the responsibility to provide pastoral care and spiritual support whenever it is needed.

The Head of Pastoral Care and the Head of RE should collaborate closely in this regard, making chaplaincy support and the sacraments available when they are sought by pupils.

RSE also enables pupils to protect themselves from harm and to identify whether they may have been, or may be being, exploited or abused. RSE may therefore prompt pupils to disclose personal information to friends or members of staff. All staff have a legal responsibility to follow the College’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, being alert to causes for concern and making prompt referrals to the appropriate authorities.

## **Staff training**

The College provides regular training for all staff, through INSET and staff meetings, to inform staff of College policy and enable them to deliver RSE effectively. The College is also committed to ensuring that relevant staff have the opportunity for further training and study where a need is identified. Any staff seeking guidance should liaise firstly with the Head of RE and/ or the Principal.

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<sup>10</sup> ‘Human Sexuality and Personal Relationships: Guidelines for Catholic Schools on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), 3.



## APPENDIX 1

### RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (R.S.E.) OVERVIEW

#### Year 5

- Relationships and marriage, emotions and communicating feelings
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Equality and respect
- How to keep clean and be physically and mentally healthy
- Keeping safe (including on-line) and where to seek trustworthy help and advice

#### Boys only

- Learn about the emotional and physical changes that will happen to them as they grow up, including all physical changes, hair, growth, shape, hormonal changes and skin changes

#### Girls Only

- Learn about the emotional and physical changes that will happen to them as they grow up, including menstruation and how to cope with periods
- Changes include moods, sebaceous gland changes, sweat and hygiene, growth and body shape changes

#### Year 6

- Relationships, including the values and attributes required.
- Conception (*Alive to the World*, ch 28)
- Learning how to differentiate between respectful and disrespectful messages about conception and life
- Psycho-sexual development, respect and self-respect
- Intrauterine development from conception to birth
- To understand that a new individual exists from the moment the sperm unites with the ovum
- To understand that growth is part of life and sexuality and that nature prepares the child marvellously for the moment of birth
- To value the role of fathers and mothers
- Childbirth
- To learn about the newborn
- To express appreciation towards parents and how to respond to the needs of the babies in our lives
- Changes in emotions, hormones and feelings and how to cope

- Changes in friendships and how this can be managed
- How to keep safe and where to go for advice
- The differences between males and females
- Feeling comfortable with the basic differences between men and women
- To relate properly to persons of the opposite sex
- Psycho-sexual development
- Tolerance and appreciation of diversity
- The special characteristics of women and rejection of all sexual discrimination

## **Girls only**

- How the body changes in boys and girls in preparation for reproduction (physically and mentally)
- How to name the main reproductive organs of both males and females, using correct terminology
- Understand about menstruation and how girls cope
- The importance of good hygiene and where to access help

## **Boys only**

- How the body changes in boys and girls in preparation for reproduction (physically and mentally)
- To name the main reproductive organs in both males and females, using correct terminology
- About menstruation and how girls cope
- The importance of good hygiene and where to access help and advice

## **Year 7**

- Understand oneself as unique
- Understand love as an expression of a relationship
- Understand the difference between sex and sexuality
- To begin to appreciate sexual intercourse as a beautiful expression of love and its place within marriage
- To understand about male and female fertility
- To understand puberty and its physical and psychological effects
- To learn about changes in personal hygiene and how to cope and manage these
- To identify a range of emotions and how to cope with them
- To identify positive and negative aspects of social media in relation to human sexuality



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- To understand how media and games can impact on relationships and personal wellbeing
- Understanding the bodily, psychological, emotional, spiritual and mental changes of puberty (*Alive to the World*, ch. 27)
- To value and accept our growth and changes as a positive process of natural maturation
- To consider our own and others' changes as natural
- To learn how to adapt to changes: hygiene, nutrition, clothing
- Hormones and hormonal changes (male and female). (*Alive to the World*, ch. 28 and 29)
- Mental development in puberty
- Friendship and sexual identity
- Accepting different rates of growth, change and development

## Boys Only

- Pupils improve their knowledge of the male reproductive system
- Pupils will learn about the physical and emotional changes experienced during puberty (revise and check – new students)
- Pupils will learn to cope with personal issues, hygiene and where to access help and advice

## Girls Only

- Improve their knowledge of the female reproductive system.
- Learn about the physical and emotional changes experienced during puberty
- Will feel confident with menstruation management, personal hygiene and related issues and know where to access help and advice.

## Year 8

- To understand the place of sexual intercourse within marriage
- To be aware of the different sexual responses of male and female
- To see the distinctions between, and values of, legal and sacramental marriage
- All aspects of consent and the law regarding relationships and sex
- To further understanding of conception, foetal development and birth
- To consider parenting including the father's role and the importance of preparedness for family life
- To deepen the students' understanding of fertility
- To accept that the possibility of a baby can never be completely excluded once sexual intercourse has taken place.
- To understand what factors can affect fertility, whether positively or negatively



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- Dating and friendship (*Alive to the World*, ch 16)
- Marriage (*Alive to the World*, ch 17)
- The virtues needed to form a happy family (*Alive to the World*, ch 18)

## Year 9

- Have a deeper understanding of female fertility
- Understand that knowledge of the female natural cycles of fertility can be successfully used to achieve or postpone pregnancy (NFP)
- Have a basic overview of the Billings Ovulation Method of Natural Fertility and Regulation in addition to the Creighton method, positives and negatives
- Accept that the possibility of a baby can never be excluded once intercourse has taken place
- Understand the gift of fertility as ordered towards family
- To recognise the resources needed for lifelong parenthood, including emotional maturity and unselfish love
- To look at dating behaviour to enable positive choices
- To understand what a contraceptive is; to know about all forms of contraceptives and how they function (including positives and negatives of each form)
- To understand emergency contraception
- To fully understand all issues surrounding consent and the law with regard to relationships and sex
- An overview of STIs, how they can be prevented and where to seek professional and trustworthy help and advice

## Year 10

- Relationships virtues, and the values of a positive relationship and how to recognise, foster and nurture these
- To fully understand the gift of fertility
- To review and revise the various methods of contraception (including emergency contraception)
- To be given a basic knowledge of chemical and surgical abortion
- To understand the emotional, psychological and physical impact of abortion
- To understand the viability and support for pregnancy and where to go for help
- To know about all sexually transmitted infections, their signs, symptoms, impact and treatment
- Where to go for trustworthy help and advice
- Choice, boundaries and consent
- Negative relationships and how to recognise, cope with, manage or avoid them



## Year 11

- To understand the importance of making healthy lifestyle choices
- To learn some signs/symptoms of cancer and that self-examination is one of the most effective ways to detect cancers early
- The importance of early detection
- An insight into the treatments and procedures related to cancer
- Understand the reasons for the HPV vaccine, regular health check-ups and cervical screening
- Know where to go for help and advice
- Be able to state some important qualities in a healthy relationship
- Learn that sexual health could be compromised by influences such as low self-esteem, alcohol and the digital world
- How to make the right choices about pregnancy and avoid STIs; where to access professional help and advice
- Learn that sexual health and emotional wellbeing could be compromised by influences such as low self-esteem, peer pressure, media and the digital world, including social media, sexting and pornography
- Students will know how to cope with these pressures to be safe and know where to access professional help and advice

## APPENDIX 2

### NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR RSE

#### **Sex and relationship education**

Sex and relationship education (SRE) is compulsory from age 11 onwards. It involves teaching children about reproduction, sexuality and sexual health. It doesn't promote early sexual activity or any particular sexual orientation.

Some parts of sex and relationship education are compulsory - these are part of the national curriculum for science. Parents can withdraw their children from all other parts of sex and relationship education if they want.

All schools must have a written policy on sex education, which they must make available to parents for free.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum/other-compulsory-subjects>



## APPENDIX 3

### RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF

All adults within the school community are responsible for promoting the Church's teaching. However, the RE department has the chief responsibility for teaching about personal relationships, sex education and PSHE. This responsibility lies with the RE department because it situates sexuality within its 'global' human, moral and spiritual context. The school's senior management and RE staff delegate various aspects of SRE to other departments and teachers.

Source: <http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/docs/20150629-BoP-Trustees-SRE-Policy-Guidelines-for-Schools.pdf>

## APPENDIX 4

### NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR SCIENCE

#### Key Stage 3

- reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta

#### Key Stage 4

- communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans (including HIV/AIDs)

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study#key-stage-4>