



HAGLEY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

SEMPER FIDELIS

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Policy Review Date:	October 2027
Post Holder Responsible for Review:	Assistant Principal: Personal Development

Commitment to Equality:

We are committed to providing a positive working environment which is free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation. We have developed a number of key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in relation to human dignity and dignity in work become embedded into every aspect of school life and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard.

This Relationships and Sex Education Policy has been approved and adopted by Hagley Catholic High School on 7th October 2025 and will be reviewed in October 2027.

Signed by the Chair of the Local Governing Body for Hagley Catholic High School:

G Taylor-Smith

Mr Geoff Taylor Smith

Signed by the Principal for Hagley Catholic High School:

J Hodgson

Mr James Hodgson

Summary of Changes

Pg. 4	Update about consultation process. Updated link to new statutory guidance released in Summer 2025 Update to statutory guidance and legal duties Updated to next review date Defining RSE - updated quotes from new guidance
Pg. 7	Update to parent and carers section Broad content of RSE – new strands are explicitly stated Removal of 'programme & resources' - this will sit within the curriculum section
Pg. 8	Curriculum & Delivery section made clearer – includes specific reference to use of Ten:Ten programme.
Pg. 9	Update to external visitor information Roles & Responsibilities – removal of 'RSE co-ordinator' to include Assistant Principal and PICCL as we do not have this role as such + update to staff section
Pg. 10	Removal of 'children's questions' as this has been included in delivery section. Update to controversial and sensitive issues.
Pg. 11	Monitoring & evaluation updated

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“Called as God’s family, we strive to achieve our personal best by living and learning in Christ. “

POLICY & STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION

In this policy the Local Governing Body and teachers, in partnership with students 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.

Consultation took place in the Autumn term of 2025 with key stakeholders:

- Consultation with parents/carers
- Consultation with the Local Governing Body
- Draft policy sent to all staff
- Student voice

As a secondary school, we must provide RSE to all students under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). In teaching RSE, we’re required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

‘The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make relationships education compulsory for all students receiving primary education and relationships and sex education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education.’

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance](#) (Page 2)

Implementation and Review of Policy

This policy was implemented in 2026 after consultation with the Governors in the Autumn term 2025. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Principal, Assistant Principal, RSE Co-ordinator, the Local Governing Body and Staff. The next review date is Autumn 2027.

Dissemination

The policy will be given to all members of the Local Governing Body, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents and carers on the school’s website and a copy is available in the school office. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum is shared with parents and carers and available on the school’s website.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

The DfE guidance states that ‘Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare students for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development.’¹.

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance](#)

It is about the development of the student’s knowledge and understanding of her or him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. In Secondary schools RSE should provide a clear progression from primary relationships education. RSE should provide young people with the information they need to develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds. This should include the knowledge they need in later life to keep themselves and others safe’²

1 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 2

2 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers Page 11

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. The following virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion.

AIM OF RSE AND THE MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour to raise students’ self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that we commit ourselves: In partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a “positive and prudent sexual education” (*Gravissimum Educationis* 1).

which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

Objectives

To develop the following attitudes and virtues:

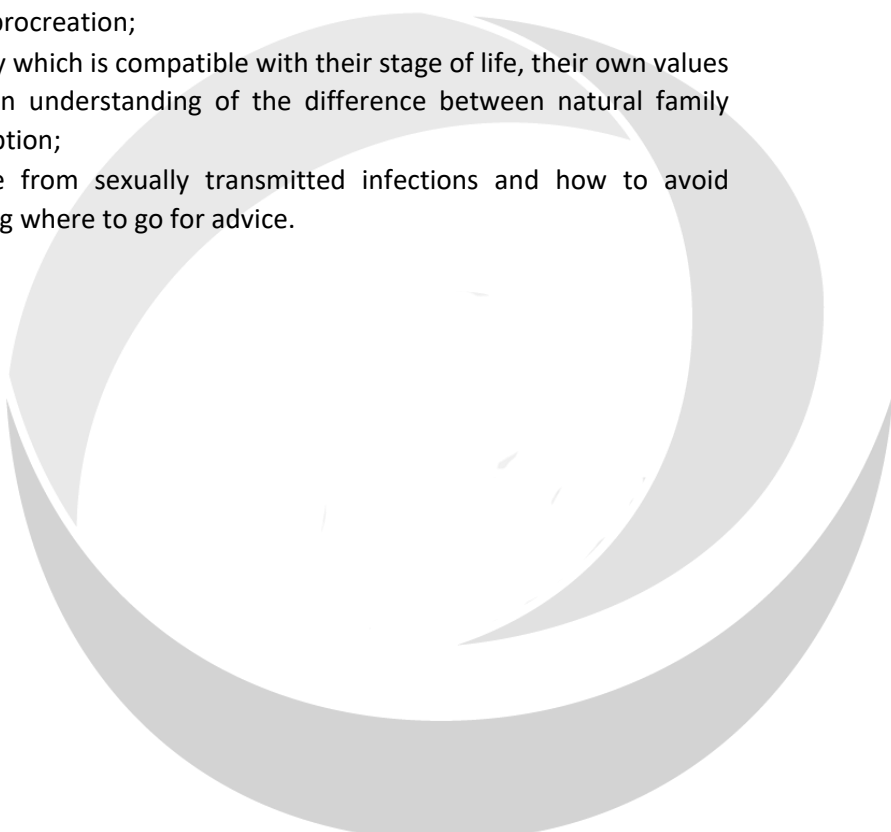
- reverence for the gift of human sexuality and fertility;
- respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others;
- joy in the goodness of the created world and their own bodily natures;
- responsibility for their own actions and a recognition of the impact of these on others;
- recognising and valuing their own sexual identity and that of others;
- celebrating the gift of life-long, self-giving love;

- recognising the importance of marriage and family life;
- fidelity in relationships.

To develop the following personal and social skills:

- making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity, and which are respectful of the individual's commitments;
- loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships and loving, stable relationships free from exploitation, abuse and bullying;
- managing emotions within relationships, and when relationships break down, with confidence, sensitivity and dignity;
- managing conflict positively, recognising the value of difference;
- cultivating humility, mercy and compassion, learning to forgive and be forgiven;
- developing self-esteem and confidence, demonstrating self-respect and empathy for others;
- building resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups and so developing the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately;
- being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours in order to minimise the risk to health and personal integrity.

To know and understand:

- the Church's teaching on relationships and the nature and meaning of sexual love;
 - the Church's teaching on marriage and the importance of marriage and family life;
 - the centrality and importance of virtue in guiding human living and loving;
 - the physical and psychological changes that accompany puberty;
 - the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation;
 - how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
 - how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.
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OUTCOMES

Inclusion and differentiated learning

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual students in respect to students' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject students to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Equal opportunities policy.

Equality obligations

The Local Governing Body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the students, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked-after children.

Broad content of RSE

Three aspects of RSE - attitudes and values; knowledge and understanding; and personal and social skills will be provided in three inter-related ways: the whole school/ethos dimension; a cross-curricular dimension and a specific relationships and sex curriculum. The topics covered in RSE include: Families, respectful relationships, online safety and awareness, being safe and intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health. In addition the following topics of health and well-being are covered: Mental 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.

PARENTS AND CARERS

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. The school will support parents and carers by providing access to materials which are used to deliver RSE. Parents will be written to annually about the RSE content their child will be covering each year so they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents will be consulted before this policy is ratified by the governors. They will be consulted at every stage of the development of the RSE programme, as well as during the process of monitoring, review and evaluation. They will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme.

Parents/carers have **the right to request to withdraw** their child from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the student turns 16. After this point, if the student wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing to the Principal. A copy of any withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The headteacher, Vice Principal or Assistant Principal will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action and provide the parents/carers with their decision in writing.

In exceptional circumstances, for example because of a safeguarding concern or a student's specific vulnerability, the headteacher can refuse a request to withdraw the student from sex education.

Alternative schoolwork will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. Please refer to the DfE guidance Page 6 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

CURRICULUM & DELIVERY

Balanced Curriculum

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. Students will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE (in secondary schools/academies relating to forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with our school's promotion of Catholic teaching. We will ensure that students have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

Responsibility for teaching the programme

Responsibility for the specific relationships and sex education programme lays with the relevant curriculum staff: form tutors, Science, Religious Education, Physical Education and Character and Culture. However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. Teachers will make sure that all students' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the age of the students. They will be role models for students of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and students. They will also be contributing to the development of students' personal and social skills.

Delivery

Much of the RSHE content is delivered through our Character and Culture dedicated curriculum time, aspects will also be taught within other curriculum subjects such as science, computing RE and PE. RSE content in Character & Culture time is specifically delivered through the Ten:Ten programme which supports students' development through a Catholic lens. Teaching strategies will include: Establishing ground rules, discussion, reflection, scenarios, group work, film & video, drama activities, theatre productions, project learning, mind mapping. Students will be assessed at various points each academic year to assess their learning in RSE.

Relationship to other policies and curriculum subjects

RSE is compatible with the school's other policy documents (for example, Bullying policy, Safeguarding Policy etc). Students with particular challenges whether of a physical or intellectual nature will receive appropriately differentiated support in order to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of students.

EXTERNAL VISITORS

Our school will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher led sessions. We will make sure that any agency and any materials used are accurate, age and stage appropriate and unbiased and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality. We will make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced. It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Checklist for External Speakers/organisations invited to Schools'. (*CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2022*)

Health professionals should follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING RSE

Local Governing Body

- draw up the RSE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers;
- ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- ensure that the policy is in accordance with other whole school policies, e.g., SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs;
- ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children;
- establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used;
- ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within RSHE.

Assistant Principal & PICCL

The Assistant Principal and PICCL with the Principal has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to RSE and the provision of in-service training. They may also be supported by the Assistant Principal with responsibility for safeguarding.

All Staff

RSE is a whole school issue. All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their students. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the Catholic Ethos of the school and model positive attitudes to RSE and avoid language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and be conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE. All staff have been included in the development of this policy, and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

CONTROVERSIAL OR SENSITIVE ISSUES

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be matter of maturity, of personal involvement or experience of children, of disagreement with the official teaching of the Church, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The Local Governing

Body believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. The use of ground rules, negotiated between teachers and students, will help to create a supportive climate for discussion. *(See also Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions, Page 40 for more detail).*

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time; teachers will ensure students are fully supported. Students will be encouraged to speak to their parents and carers and in some cases, school might signpost students to support services where needed.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE AT RISK

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their students and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a child or young person is a victim of or is at risk of abuse, they are required to follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE

All Local Governing Body representatives, all teachers, all support staff, all parents/carers and all students must be made aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality.

All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, will have the best interests of students at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Students will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help students facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to students that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality, in matters which are illegal or abusive for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, Principal, but that the students would always be informed first that such action was going to be taken.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Assistant Principal – Pastoral care & personal development & the PICCL through:

- Student voice
- Learning walks
- Book trawls
- Curriculum review
- External visitor evaluation
- Staff voice
- Parent voice

Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.