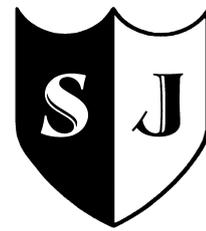


St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

'Growing in Faith, Faith in Growing'



Family Life and Sex Education Policy

The mission of St. Joseph's school is to encourage spiritual awareness, promote a full understanding of the catholic faith and foster the development of all the gifts and skills with which the children in our care are endowed.

Introduction

Suitable family life education for children has long been recommended by the Church:

"With the help of advances in psychology and in the art of science teaching, children and young people should be assisted with the harmonious development of their physical, moral and intellectual endowments ... As they advance in years, they should be given positive and prudent sexual education."

(Vatican Council II Declaration on Christian Education)

It is essential that sex education should be offered in our schools as part of an integrated programme of family life education. This will enable young people to develop and understanding that sexuality and human development relate to other aspects of life and society, such as love, relationships and family life.

Within the Religious Education programme opportunities constantly arise for promoting a gradual understanding and healthy appreciation of self, of growth, of relationships with others, of love, marriage and family life, as well as a growing awareness of the facts of human reproduction. Much of the Religious Education programme speaks for itself about growing in love and the development of good personal relationships. The attempt, therefore, has been to let Religious Education units speak for themselves whilst at the same time running alongside these units more specific areas which can be developed to help in the process of sexual education. Above all, we hope these guidelines will be of help to all who have the responsibility of helping children appreciate God's gift of life in its fullest context.

THE SCHOOL'S LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

(From DFES Sex and Relationship Education Policy Guidelines: Effective 1/11/00)

The governing body will have a written statement of the policy available to parents. The statement must be drawn up in consultation with the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher must ensure that any sex education is provided in a way that ensures pupils are taught about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and for bringing up children, and that pupils are protected from teaching materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and cultural background of the pupils concerned.

Maintained primary schools may need to clarify whether sex and relationship education is included in the school's curriculum and, if so, what the educational provision will consist of and how it will be organised.

All primary schools will need to have a sex and relationship education programme tailored to the age, physical and emotional maturity of the children.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided, but not from teaching the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under National Curriculum science.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

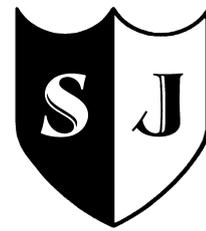
Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children in the faith. Part of this responsibility is the teaching of their children about human development and procreation.

Experience has shown that most parents welcome the catholic school providing a well planned programme of family life education.



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Many parents have said that they have found it much easier to discuss the subject when their children have had lessons about family life matters at school.

To enable parents to play their part they must be fully informed about the school's family life education policy. They should be able to see in advance the resources used and invited to view videos or television programmes which are to be shown, and told when topics are going to be discussed.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Foundation Stage to Year Four (ages 3 to 9)

It is not recommended that what would technically be called "sex education" should occur below Year Five, but Family Life education can begin from the child's first year in school. There should be a clear policy that each teacher should take the opportunities provided by the Learning and Growing as Children of God scheme in general and the 'Towards a Family Life / Sex Education' document in particular to lay down a sound basis for later work. The 'Towards a Family Life / Sex Education' document provides examples of how to integrate family life education with the first years of the Religious Education programme.

Years Five and Six (ages 9 to 11)

The diocese recommends that family life education in the final two years of the primary school should continue to be set on the firm principles already established. There will be many opportunities for this during work based on the Learning and Growing as Children of God and some suggestions are given in the 'Towards a Family Life / Sex Education' document. There is also the 'All That I Am' Scheme of work which has been developed to work alongside the archdiocesan scheme.

We recommend that as part of the family life education appropriate information about human development and procreation should be taught in the final two years in the primary school. When biological aspects of family life education are addressed and dealt with within the religious education lesson, schools should ensure that this does not mean a reduction of time devoted to specifically religious topics. In particular the minimum of 10% of the timetable devoted to RE should always be achieved.

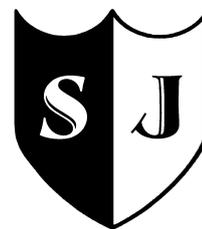
Who Should Teach This Subject?

Since we recommend that Family Life education takes place in the context of Religious Education it should normally be taught by the teacher who takes the class for Religious Education. This will, of course, should be a practising Catholic. Sometimes the school will decide that another member of staff, other than the class teacher, might be more appropriate, but the diocese recommends that responsibility for family life education in the school should never, wholly, be left to outside agencies, such as the school nursing service, although they may play a part as and when appropriate

Other Issues

It is important to know that the diocese has a clear Family Life Education policy for Secondary Schools. Many of the more difficult issues in family life education are dealt with more suitably in the secondary school.





Therefore it is not necessary for the primary school to go into every aspect of the subject, to give all the details or discuss every moral issue. These will be better dealt with when the pupils have more maturity.

Teachers will need to deal wisely with genuine questions from children. In some cases it will be better to give answers individually rather than in the presence of the whole class. Children mature at different rates, and some pupils have greater knowledge of sexual matters than others. Teachers will not wish to go into matters inappropriate for many of the children in the class simply because some children are familiar with them.

Aims and objectives

We teach children about:

- The physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults
- The way humans reproduce
- Respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship - marriage
- The importance of family life
- The importance of personal hygiene and health education
- Moral questions;
- Relationship issues;
- Respect for the views of other people;
- What they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.
- All of these issues, whether taught through R.E., Science and PSHE, will be taught within the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church

Context

We teach sex education in the context of the school's aims and values. 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 values which underpin all our work in school.

In particular, we teach sex education in the belief that:

- Sex education should be taught in the context of marriage and family life;
- Sex education is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process;
- 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.

Towards A Family Life / Sex Education Scheme of Work / All That I Am

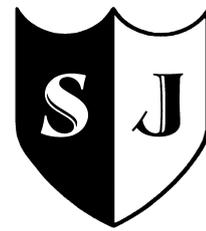
The core of our teaching resources for Sex and Relationship Education can be found in two documents.

1. The School's own Scheme of Work 'Towards A Family Life / Sex Education Scheme'. This highlights opportunities within the R.E, PSHE and Science Curriculum to teach about family life, growth and development within the ethos and values of the school.

2. The 'All That I Am' resource pack produced by the Archdiocese of Birmingham. This is a resource to be used in conjunction with our own scheme, with particular emphasis on work with children in Year 5.



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School Prospectus Statement

The statement on Family Life / Sex education in our School Prospectus will be as follows:

Family Life and Sex Education

Family Life and Sex Education will be taught within the school's Religious Education, Personal, Social, Health Education and Science Schemes of Work. This is encapsulated in the Towards a Family Life / Sex Education Policy and Scheme of Work, which is based upon guidelines given by the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

At the centre of our policy is the Catholic Church's teaching on the sanctity of Marriage and on morality, spirituality and family values. The Governors wish to reassure parents that it is recognised that in this area you are the children's first educators and that the school's policy is designed to support you in this sensitive area of the curriculum.

As Parents you have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided, but not from teaching the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under National Curriculum science.

Copies of our Family Life / Sex Education Policy are available from the school office.

Policy Revision

This policy was revised in September 2015 and was presented to Governors during Autumn Term 2015.

