Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

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Status	Statutory
Person responsible	Mrs T Whitton
Date ratified by Governing Body	15th October 2026
Version	1

Mission Statement

Twelve Apostles' Mission Statement: Through Loving and Learning we will follow Jesus

1. To place Christ at the centre of everything we do
2. To recognise that each child is unique and to ensure that each child is educated to fulfil their human potential
3. To develop an understanding of Community; being able to recognise, respect and celebrate the diversity of all within it.

In this policy, the governors and teachers of Twelve Apostles RC Primary School, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Liverpool, pupils and their parents and carers, set out their intentions for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). The policy explains the school's rationale for RSHE and the approach taken, rooted in the school mission: *Through Loving and Learning we will follow Jesus.*

This policy has been developed following consultation with staff, pupils, parents and governors. The consultation process included pupil voice activities, parent and stakeholder consultation, review of the RSHE curriculum and resources, consideration of Archdiocesan guidance materials and ratification by the Governing Body.

The Purpose

The aims of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) at Twelve Apostles RCPS are to:

- develop reverence for the gift of human life, sexuality and fertility;
- respect the dignity of every human being in themselves and in others;
- recognise the importance of marriage and family life;
- develop self-esteem, confidence, self-respect and empathy for others;
- build resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures;
- learn how to keep themselves safe, including online and in relationships;
- understand the physical and emotional changes that accompany puberty;
- make sound judgements and good choices rooted in Catholic values.

Rationale

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full'

(Jn. 10:10)

We are involved in Relationships, Sex and Health Education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of each person, made in the image and likeness of God, underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSHE is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching on the human person and presented within a positive framework of Christian ideals.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity: Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that

we are made in the image and likeness of God, gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflecting God's beauty and sharing in divine creativity. RSHE is therefore placed firmly within the context of relationship.

All RSHE will be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and family life while acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Values and Virtues

The programme promotes Catholic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes the virtues essential in responding to God's call to love others with 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.

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of this policy will take place following consultation with the Governing Body during the Autumn Term 2026. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, RE/RSHE Co-ordinator, Governing Body and staff. The next review date is September 2027, or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

This policy is available to governors, staff and parents via the school website and school office. Details of the RSHE curriculum, including the resources used, will be made available to parents and carers so that they can understand what their children are learning.

Defining Relationships, Sex and Health Education

The Department for Education guidance states that children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High-quality RSHE supports pupils' moral, social, mental and physical development and helps them to develop positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness and trustworthiness.

RSHE is about the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of themselves as human beings, called to live in right relationships with themselves, with others and with God. In primary schools, the focus is on teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of positive relationships, supporting children to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.

Statutory Curriculum Requirements

The school is legally required to teach Relationships Education and Health Education to all pupils, and to teach those aspects of sex education that are statutory within the National Curriculum Science programme of study. This policy also takes account of the Equality Act 2010, Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school's safeguarding duties, Archdiocesan guidance and the revised Department for Education RSHE guidance for introduction from 1 September 2026.

Balanced Curriculum

Promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, the school will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme. Pupils will receive clear scientific information and will learn about the law, rights, responsibilities, safety and respect in an age-appropriate way. Knowing facts and exploring differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with the school's promotion of Catholic teaching.

Broad Content of RSHE

Three aspects of RSHE will be provided in inter-related ways: attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills. These will be taught through the whole-school ethos, cross-curricular links and the specific Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum.

The programme covers the statutory Relationships Education and Health Education curriculum, and those aspects of Sex Education appropriate to a Catholic primary school, through Journey in Love, SCARF, No Outsiders, Religious Education, Science, safeguarding education and the wider PSHE curriculum.

Teaching strategies may include establishing ground rules, distancing techniques, discussion, reflection, active learning, group work, role play, film and video, values clarification, questioning and opportunities for pupils to ask age-appropriate questions.

We have adapted the Scarf programme of work and utilised the programme No Outsiders, considering these through curriculum outcomes through the Liverpool Archdiocese guidance, Catholic Lens.

Resources

The following resources support delivery of the RSHE curriculum:

- Archdiocese of Liverpool guidance and Catholic Lens materials
- Journey in Love
- SCARF Programme of Work
- No Outsiders
- The Religious Education Directory, *To Know You More Clearly*
- Department for Education statutory RSHE guidance
- NSPCC PANTS resources
- CEOP/Thinkuknow resources
- PSHE Association materials

Children's Questions

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere in which RSHE can take place. Pupils should be able to ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered in an age-appropriate way and be free from bullying or harassment. Ground rules and distancing techniques will be used to create a supportive climate for discussion. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of our curriculum, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

Inclusion, Equalities and Adaptive Teaching

The school will ensure that RSHE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and is adapted through high-quality adaptive teaching. Lessons are carefully sequenced, vocabulary is explicitly

taught, learning is broken into manageable steps and staff use modelling, questioning, feedback and flexible grouping to support access for all pupils while maintaining high expectations.

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

Pupils with specific challenges, whether physical, emotional, social or intellectual, will receive appropriately adapted teaching and support to enable them to develop knowledge, understanding and skills within their capacity.

Assessment

Pupils' learning will be assessed through teacher observation, discussion, pupil voice, retrieval activities, work scrutiny and the school's assessment arrangements for the Curriculum for Life and PSHE curriculum. Assessment will focus on pupils' knowledge, understanding, vocabulary, attitudes and ability to apply learning safely and respectfully.

Parents and Carers

The school recognises that parents and carers 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 by sharing information about the curriculum, providing opportunities to review resources and informing parents when more sensitive aspects of RSHE will be taught.

- Families and people who care for me.
- Caring friendships.
- Respectful relationships.
- Online relationships.
- Being safe.

Parents will be consulted before this policy is ratified by governors and during the monitoring, review and evaluation of the RSHE programme. The school's aim is that parents and carers have confidence in the school's RSHE programme and understand how it meets their child's needs within a Catholic framework.

Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory elements of Sex Education, except those elements which are required by the National Curriculum Science programme of study. Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Headteacher, who will discuss the request with parents and make appropriate arrangements. The school believes that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed.

Alternative work will be provided for pupils withdrawn from non-statutory Sex Education.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from statutory Relationships Education or Health Education, as set out in the Department for Education statutory guidance, *Relationships*

Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, revised July 2025 for introduction from 1 September 2026.

Responsibility for Teaching the Programme

Responsibility for the specific Relationships, Sex and Health Education programme resides with the Headteacher, RE/ PSHE/RSHE Co-ordinator and teaching staff. RSHE is delivered through the Curriculum for Life, PSHE, Science, Religious Education and other appropriate curriculum areas.

All staff contribute to the attitudes and values aspect of the RSHE programme. They are role models for pupils in building healthy, respectful and wholesome relationships and contribute to pupils' personal and social development.

External Visitors

The school may call upon appropriate outside agencies and health specialists to support aspects of RSHE. Such visits will complement the current programme and will never substitute or replace teacher-led sessions. External visitors must be clear about their role and responsibilities, follow school safeguarding procedures and ensure that teaching is consistent with Catholic principles and practice.

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE as this forms part of the Teaching Standards. Any staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

Staff are responsible for:

- **Governors** will approve the policy, ensure that it is available to parents, monitor its implementation and ensure that statutory requirements are met.
- **The Headteacher** takes overall delegated responsibility for implementation of the policy and liaison with governors, parents, the Archdiocese, trustees where appropriate and relevant agencies.
- **The PSHE/RSHE/RE Co-ordinator** supports staff in implementing the policy, leads on curriculum planning and supports monitoring, evaluation and staff development.
- **All staff** have a responsibility to teach RSHE in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school, model positive relationships and respond appropriately to pupils' needs and questions.
- **Pupils** are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with dignity, respect and sensitivity.

Relationship to Other Policies and Curriculum Subjects

This policy is delivered as part of the Curriculum for Life and should be read alongside

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Behaviour Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Online Safety Policy
SEND Policy
RE Policy
Science curriculum

PSHE (Curriculum for Life) curriculum
Teaching and Learning Policy.

Supporting Children Who Are at Risk

Children need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSHE takes place. Effective RSHE provides opportunities to discuss what is and is not appropriate in relationships and may lead to disclosures of safeguarding concerns. Where a member of staff suspects that a child is a victim of, or at risk of, abuse, they must follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Confidentiality and Advice

All lessons, especially those in the RSHE programme, will have the best interests of pupils at heart. Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents and carers about the issues discussed. Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality where matters are illegal, abusive or raise safeguarding concerns. In such circumstances, staff will follow safeguarding procedures and inform appropriate colleagues.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RE/ PSHE/RSHE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the programme through curriculum planning, learning walks, pupil voice, work scrutiny, staff discussion and review of resources. The programme will be evaluated through feedback from pupils, staff, parents and governors. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy and will consider monitoring and evaluation evidence before amendments are made.

Appendix 1

Appendix 1: Primary Relationships Education Statutory Learning Opportunities

Families and people who care for me

That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care
That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong
How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

Caring friendships

How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends
The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right
How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

Respectful relationships

The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
The conventions of courtesy and manners
The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority
About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive

The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults

Online relationships

That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
How information and data is shared and used online

Being safe

What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe
That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard
How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
Where to get advice from e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Mental wellbeing

That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
That there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings
How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness
Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support

That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing
Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online)
It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough

Internet safety and harms

That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits
About the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing
How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted
That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health
How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted
Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online

Physical health and fitness

The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle
The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise
The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity)
How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health

Healthy eating

What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content)
The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals
The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health)

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking

Health and prevention

How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body
About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer
The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn
About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist
About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination

Basic first aid

How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary
Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries

Changing adolescent body

Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes
About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle

Appendix 2: Religious Education Directory Branches and RSHE Links

To Know You More Clearly and Relationships, Sex and Health Education

Mapping RSHE through the branches of the Religious Education Directory

Introduction

The following guidance replaces the previous Come and See mapping and reflects the structure of the Religious Education Directory, *To Know You More Clearly*. It shows how the six branches of the RED can support age-appropriate Relationships, Sex and Health Education within a Catholic understanding of the dignity of the human person, family life, friendship, vocation, respect, care for creation, forgiveness, personal safety and the common good.

Each branch is taught through the lenses of Hear, Believe, Celebrate and Live. RSHE links should be drawn out through Scripture, Catholic teaching, prayer and liturgy, pupil reflection, discussion, PSHE, science, safeguarding education and Catholic Social Teaching. These links should be adapted to the age and stage of pupils and remain consistent with the school's Catholic ethos.

RED Branch	Catholic focus	RSHE links
Creation and Covenant	God creates every person in love and calls humanity into relationship with Him, one another and creation.	• Human dignity, uniqueness and being made in the image and likeness of God. • Family, belonging, identity, names, community and care. • Respect for self, others and creation; stewardship and responsibility.
Prophecy and Promise	God's people wait in hope and are called to listen, trust and prepare for the coming of Jesus.	• Hope, patience, expectations and managing feelings. • Making promises, keeping commitments and understanding trust. • Preparing well for change, transition and new experiences.
Galilee to Jerusalem	Jesus teaches, heals, welcomes and shows people how to live in loving relationship with God and neighbour.	• Friendship, kindness, compassion, inclusion and respect. • Recognising trusted adults and seeking help when worried or unsafe. • Jesus' example of welcome, service, healing and care for those who are vulnerable.
Desert to Garden	Lent, Holy Week and Easter reveal sacrifice, forgiveness, reconciliation, suffering, death and new life.	• Saying sorry, forgiving, repairing relationships and making good choices. • Bereavement, loss, change and support during difficult times. • Self-discipline, resilience, sacrifice and hope.
To the Ends of the Earth	The Holy Spirit empowers the Church to witness, serve and live as disciples of Jesus.	• Courage, confidence, witness, service and using gifts for others. • Working together, participation, community and the common good.

		• Vocation, responsibility and making a positive contribution.
Dialogue and Encounter	Pupils learn to encounter others with respect, listen carefully and recognise the dignity of people from different faiths, cultures and communities.	• Respectful relationships, diversity, equality, dignity and inclusion. • Listening, dialogue, empathy, resolving conflict and challenging prejudice. • Catholic Social Teaching, solidarity, human dignity and the common good.

The RED branches provide a Catholic framework for revisiting key RSHE themes progressively across the school. Teachers should make explicit links where appropriate, while ensuring that statutory RSHE content is also covered through PSHE, science, safeguarding education and the school's chosen RSHE resources.

Appendix 3: Statutory Science Curriculum

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