



RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the aspirations of our *Mission Statement* it is our responsibility to ensure that our students receive an informative, appropriate and sensitive education in sexual matters throughout the years of their college life in the context of the teaching of the Catholic Church. In practice, therefore, sex education is referred to within the college as *Relationships Education*.

We recognise that such education is, in the first place, the duty of the *family* - the best possible environment in which a child may secure a gradual education in sexual life. It is the role of the college to assist and complement the work of parents in giving young people an appreciation of sexuality in its moral and personal context.

AIMS

- To promote family life;
- To support the personal, physical, emotional, intellectual, moral and social development of all students;
- To foster self-awareness, self-esteem and a sense of moral responsibility;
- To encourage the exploration of values and moral issues;
- To combat ignorance and increase understanding;
- To consider sexuality in the context of personal relationships;
- To support the ability of our students to make informed decisions;
- To prepare our students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life; and
- To provide such an education for *all* our students

PRINCIPLES

- Sexuality is essential to our personal integrity. It is God's gift to us. As parents and teachers we have the obligation to offer our children and young people Christ's vision of being human as "Good News". We must have good news to offer them in their understanding of their sexuality as well as of every other dimension of their lives. Sexuality is an integral part of the development of the personality and of the educative process. "It is in fact, from sex that the human person receives the characteristics which, on the biological, psychological and spiritual level, makes that person a man or woman and thereby largely conditions his or her progress towards maturity and insertion into society" (Education Guidance in Human Love - 1983). Pope John Paul further stated that the education in sexuality of people should be truly and fully personal "for sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person – body, emotion and soul – and manifests in its inmost meaning in the leading the person to the gift of self in love".
- In our college, all the education we offer our young people should service the overall Mission of the college and should be understood and accepted by all who work with our young people in our college.
- This Relationships Education Policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy.

CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

Sex and relationship education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.

It has three main elements:

Attitudes and values

- learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children;
- learning the value of respect, love and care;
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

Personal and social skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- developing self-respect and empathy for others;
- learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- managing conflict; and
- learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Knowledge and understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay;
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy; and
- using appropriate language in context.

As Sex and Relationships Education is so important we will use outside speakers and agencies where appropriate to enrich the programme. On some occasions we will suspend the timetable so that we can devote additional time so that particular issues can be explored in greater depth. All of our sex and relationships teaching will adhere to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and its emphasis on marriage and family life and the sanctity of life.

Our Approach

Sex and relationships education is taught as part of a wider programme of social, personal and health education. Some aspects will be delivered through Science and RE.

Throughout the college, staff respond to children's questions as they arise within the context of this policy, by replying with sensitivity and in a manner suited to the needs of the student.

It is our intention that sex education is delivered by the class teachers or nominated teachers within college. All staff will receive appropriate training to deliver the course. The whole programme of Relationships Education is seen as a shared responsibility of all members of staff and expertise is recruited from all areas of the curriculum so that the young people receive a coherent message throughout their years at the college.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first. Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the staff member will seek to ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.

Should a student disclose a confidential, controversial or sensitive issue to a member of staff, the staff member will refer the case to the Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO) immediately; followed by a written report including the time of disclosure. This report must be signed and dated and given to the CPLO by the staff member within twenty four hours.

- the young person will be strongly encouraged by the CPLO to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice. The CPLO will record the events including any telephone conversations.
- child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary.
- the young person will have access to appropriate counselling.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student but in a classroom situation they must follow the college's Confidentiality Policy.

The Parental Right to Withdraw their Son or Daughter from Sex Education Lessons:

Section 241 of the Education Act 1993 gives parents the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of the college's programme of sex education, other than those elements which are required by the National Curriculum Science Order. It is realised that, under exceptional circumstances, a very small number of parents may wish to exclude their children from this programme. In this case, such parents should write to the Headmaster, stating their objections. The schemes of work contained within this document will enable parents to estimate the point at which specific aspects of sex education will be delivered to their child. The biological element of reproduction remains within the National Curriculum Science Order for Key Stage 3 and is covered in detail during the GCSE course. Other issues are dealt with in Religious, Personal and Social Education.

Dissemination of the Policy

Copies are available on request, free of charge, to parents and members of the community.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Date of next review: March 2021

The Governing Body agreed this policy on 23 March 2018.